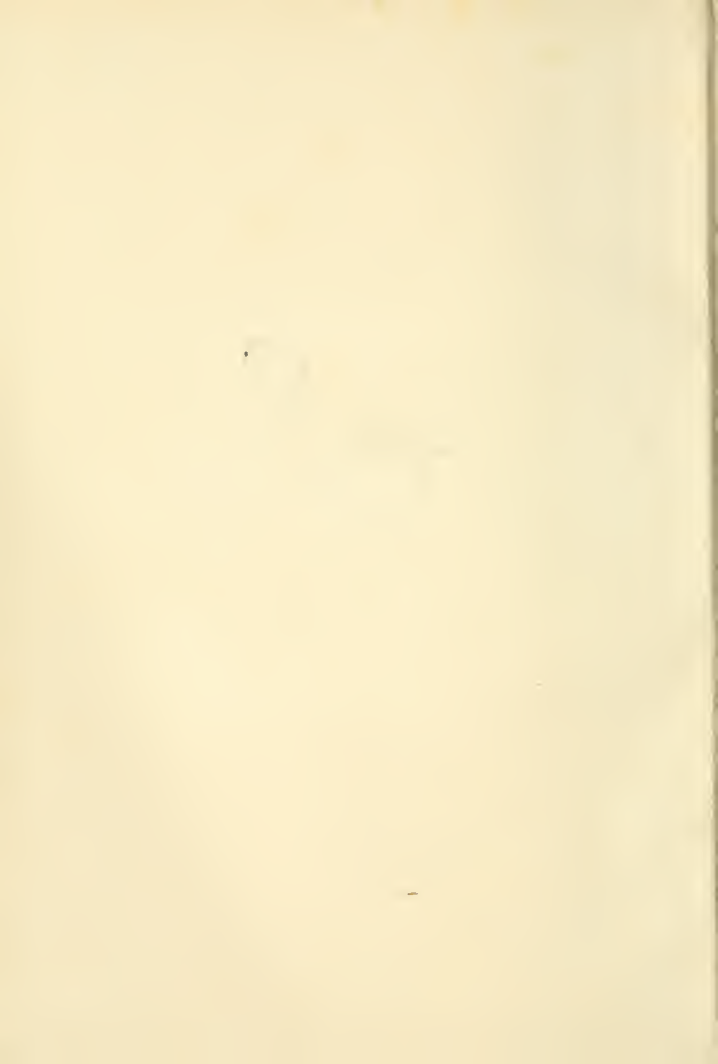
THINGS SEEN IN PALESTINE



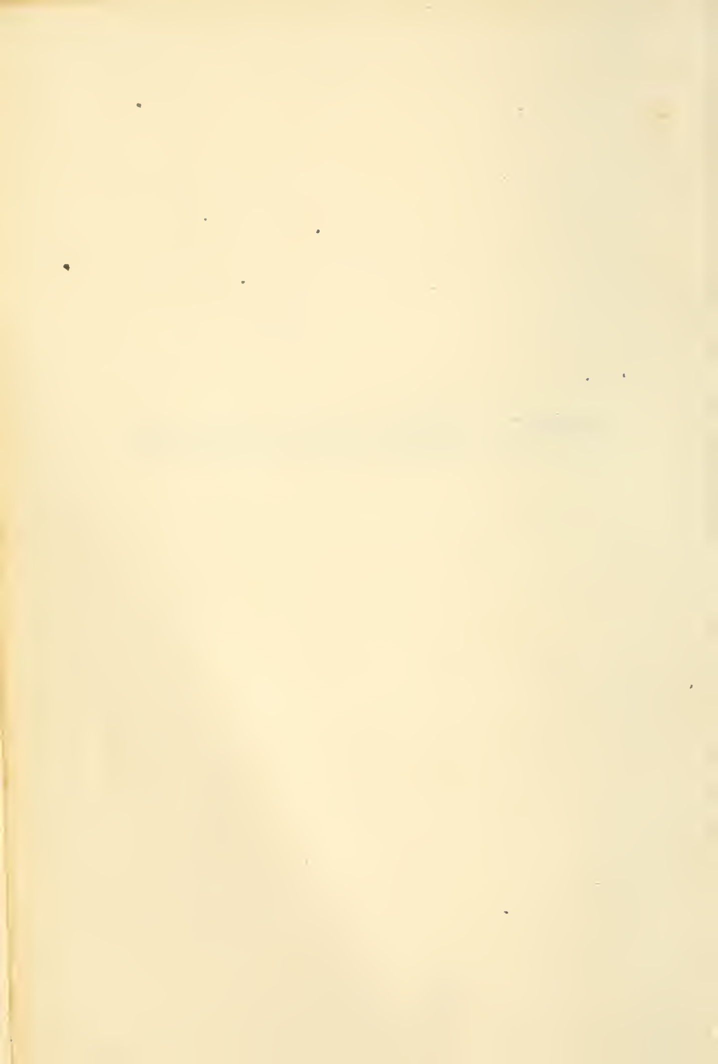
A. GOODRICH-FREER







THINGS SEEN IN PALESTINE







Jerusalem.

PEASANT WOMEN LADEN WITH CAULIFLOWERS.

The fellaheen grow vegetables of enormous size, especially cauliflowers and radishes. They come mainly from Siloam and Lifta, villages in which water is abundant.

THINGS SEEN IN PALESTINE

BY

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&c., &c.

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CONTENTS



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

List of Illustrations

List of Illustrations

List of Illustrations



AT THE JAFFA GATE



MOUNTED BEDOUIN ARAB SHEIKH.

Things Seen in Palestine

CHAPTER I

AT THE JAFFA GATE

THERE is probably no country about which most of us have read so much, and of which we know so little, as the Holy Land.

How many of us, for example, would not be surprised to hear that the ordinary language of Jerusalem is Arabic, that there are not fifty Turks in the town, that most of the Christian population belongs to the Greek Church, that the principal part of the European population is German, that two-thirds of the pilgrims are Russian, that the coinage is mainly French, and the agriculture largely Jewish ?

And again, most of us find it difficult to conjure up any coherent picture of places, the names of which are so familiar, as Jerusalem, Bethlehem, or Jericho. We have seen the conventional sacred pictures, and, apart from those in which the landscape is Dutch or Italian, they present outlines and colourings so unfamiliar, with their flat roofs, their box-like buildings, their quaint costumes, that we are inclined to overestimate the degree of conventionality, to regard them as stage decoration, and to dismiss them as not much more actual than the others. Tourists and European commerce, and the march of civilization notwithstanding, there is still much of truth in the phrase "the unchanging East." We are inclined to think of such pictures as being, like the Dutch Madonnas and Italian Apostles, peculiar to the age in which they were produced, not realizing that the landscape of Judæa, depicted according to the description of some crusader



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

JAFFA.

The landing-place at Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem. The tower of the Franciscan church is seen on the hill-top.



or early pilgrim, is as true to the reality of to-day, as of centuries ago.

The great safeguard for the preservation of Oriental characteristics lies in the fact that few of the Europeans who dwell in the country, and very few of those who visit it, acquire, or even seek to acquire, the language of the people.

On the other hand, the natives are so quick and so imitative that they, only too soon, acquire the languages of the Europeans, and it is not a matter for rejoicing when an inhabitant of Bethlehem, or Nazareth, or Tiberias, looking like St. Joseph or St. Peter, addresses you in fluent English, with an American or cockney accent! It is, naturally, mainly in and near the towns that the people are losing their individuality—giving up their picturesque dress, and acquiring that minimum of education which unfits them for honest labour. Happily the possibilities of education of a higher type are not lacking.

especially since the possession of a Constitution has added at once to their ambitions, and to the facilities for gratifying them. Special mention should also be made of the admirable schools and colleges provided by the Jews, mainly of London and Germany, for their co-religionists in Palestine, and which are also attended, when space permits, by Christians and Moslems.

Further afield, moreover, among the Fellaheen and the Bedu (the agricultural and the desert population), one may find oneself back in the Old Testament, may reconstruct the lives of the patriarchs, hear the same stories of quarrels over pastures and wells, over the buying and selling of land, over questions of dividing inheritance. It is extraordinary how the Bible stories gain in interest, and become vivid and lifelike, when one has an intimate knowledge of the Holy Land ; how countless little touches, overlooked before, spring into new meaning and importance ; for the Arabs

who occupy the country in the present day are Semites, as were the Hebrews of old; the psychology, customs, personal appearance, and probably in great degree the dress, housing, and surroundings are the same.

This is not, of course, a side of life of which the tourist is likely to see anything, or which is known to most of those with whom he will be brought in contact. However, even in the cities, he may still see something of the real thing; he may watch the peasants coming in from the villages to buy and sell in Jerusalem, to choose a bridal outfit, to have a letter written by a professional scribe, to acquire some charm or amulet for the healing of the sick.

Let us, in fancy, stand for a short time at one of the Gates of Jerusalem, and watch the people as they come and go. The Jaffa Gate looks to the south. The natives call it "Bab el-Khaleel," the Gate of the Friend, because it faces the road

which leads past the Tomb of Rachel, past Bethlehem, past the Pools of Solomon, to Hebron, the home of Abraham, "the Friend of God." This is the gate nearest to the busy parts of the town, to the "sooks," or trading streets.

It is midday, and the villagers who came in at sunrise this morning have sold their goods—eggs, chickens, garden produce, jars of *lebben*, or sour milk—and are leaving the town. It is generally possible to tell from their dress to what village they belong. The prevailing colours among the women are dark blue and red; while the long hanging veil falling backward from the face is blue or white, generally embroidered, or bordered with lace or fringe. Each carries a basket, wide and shallow, upon her head, in which her goods for sale have been piled up; most have a baby suspended in a sort of hammock upon the back, while an elder child may sit astride upon her shoulder; and a third, perhaps a fourth, cling to her



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

GOING TO MARKET.

Market women carry their wares on their heads, and their children on their backs, in order to leave their hands free for doing business.



skirts. The blessing of "olive branches" seldom fails the Semitic races, and the market-woman must keep her hands free for handling her goods.

The men, in striped mantles of goats' hair and long cotton shirts reaching to the feet, blue or in coloured stripes, will not accompany their families homeward, but, like their sex everywhere else, will remain behind to talk and to hear the news. All around the gate, and for some distance beside the roads leading towards it, are stalls where they can buy flat cakes of bread, such fruit as is in season, or, if they are minded to luxuries, eggs roasted in hot embers, or morsels of meat strung and fried upon skewers (*kebâbs*). They will eat standing, and then cross the road to one of the coffee-houses, where for a *metalik*, about a halfpenny, they will get a cup of coffee and a low stool, and very likely will remain there till sunset. The true Oriental has an immense capacity for inertia. If his

funds allows him tobacco, cigarettes, or a water-pipe, he is in Elysium.

There are many townsmen in the crowd. They look better fed and less dark in complexion than their village neighbours. If not in European clothing—ill-adapted for the dust and heat of the town—they are wearing shirts similar to those of the fellaheen, but often of silk, and usually with a European cloth coat instead of the heavy mantle of the agricultural peasant. The fine stalwart man yonder in a black mantle, finished at the neck with gold or silver embroidery, is from Bethlehem; his wife, portly and prosperous, is distinguished by her tall head-dress — a scarlet cap decorated with coins, from which depends a long veil of lighter material than that of other peasants; but then Bethlehem may almost rank as a town.

The Jerusalem townswomen, such as still wear the costume of the country, are conveniently attired in two sheets fastened



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

INSIDE THE JAFFA GATE.

The fellaheen are coming in to market. Summer and winter they wear the heavy outer garment as a protection alike from heat and cold.



together at the waist by a draw-string, of which one covers the skirts—often fashionable and elegant—and the other is drawn over the head. The younger women sometimes modify the upper sheet into a more shapely cape. All who are Moslems, and many Christians, conceal their features by a *mandeel* — a square of coloured and figured muslin—often with an elaborate lace edging. The sheets (*izar*) may be of white cotton, or of wool, or more often of silk, often of rich quality and design. Those whom we see to-day are wearing, for the most part, white cotton, which is a sign of conservatism rather than of poverty, and, indeed, many of the ladies of the oldest families refuse to wear silk at all, as being a modern innovation copied from Constantinople, and unworthy of staid housekeepers who do their own shopping, with a servant or two in attendance.

Here are some ladies in costumes of extremest fashion. They are probably

Levantines, partly European, and holding much the same position as the Eurasian further East. They may, however, be Arabs—Christians, of course—who have given up their own graceful costume for this travesty of Paris or New York. The man of the same species wears, probably, a coloured frock-coat—a chess-board pattern is in favour—bright yellow boots, and a *tarboosh* (fez), to denote that he is a Turkish subject. Every third or fourth who passes by is a Jew; if of the highest class he, or she, is in European dress, with the same note of difference as one finds elsewhere among Jews; if of the lower class, the women are dressed in anything which happens to occur to them, plus an incredible number of ornaments; if married they are wearing the hair covered by a wig or handkerchief; the men, at least all the Oriental Jews, wear a long gaberdine of velvet, cotton, or silk, a fur-brimmed hat, and cork-screw curls on either side the face



WOMAN AND CHILD.

This woman, whose dress and ornaments are Egyptian rather than Syrian, is a representative of the colony left behind in the Philistine Plain by Ibrahim Pasha, who conquered Syria in 1833.



in obedience to the law, "Thou shalt not round the corners of thy beard." They prefer such colours as orange, peacock-blue, and emerald green. They are heavy in their movements, and are making for the nearest carriage-stand. You may see six or eight of them sharing one of the victorias, which are the common cabs of an Oriental town.

Here and there we note a Bedawee, easily differentiated from all around him by his air of distinction, even though his single garment be in rags. He has an aspect of detachment, not unlike that of the camel he is riding, or perhaps leading. He walks with the easy stride of one accustomed to the desert sands; his head is well set upon his shoulders, he appears disdainful of cold or heat; he is alone or with other men; he rarely brings his women into the town. If they are present they are easily recognized; long thick plaits of jet-black hair are probably visible, hanging low

among the folds of the dark blue veil. The face is tatooed, often with the family crest—that is, the *wasm* of the tribe to which they belong. The gown, also of blue, is kilted for walking, as, were it loosened, it would lie a yard or two on the ground before as well as behind. This, with the sleeves falling to the feet, is a sign that the wearer has done no work beyond the little which tent-life demands. The labouring fellaha of the villages has short skirts, and sleeves which she can fasten behind the neck when at work. Race and not wealth is the pride of the desert, though, like Abraham, many have riches of flocks, and herds, and camels, and servants. One, of whom an ironical European asked, "I suppose your genealogy is as old as Abraham?" replied: "Yes, indeed, but he was not at all of good family!"

As we look out from the shade of the Bab el-Khaleel the mere aspect of the passers-by has, even for the most experienced



PREPARING FOR THE MID-DAY PRAYER

While on a journey in the desert.



traveller, something which is different from that of any other crowd upon earth. So far as we have already described it, the same elements might be noticed, more or less, in other Eastern cities—in Constantinople, Damascus, Cairo. But though the dwellers in these places have much in common, Jerusalem stands alone in the extraordinary variety of the races who come from every part of the world to visit the sacred city. In the course of many years' intimate knowledge of the Holy Land, I have met representatives of all five continents, and of a large proportion of the nations whom those continents represent.

The shrines of Jerusalem are dear to Christian, Jew, and Moslem. Palestine is easily reached from every part of Europe, and even Icelanders, Finns, and Scandinavians have not found the journey too long. Port Said, but one night's journey from Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem, is the gate of the Red Sea, through which most

travellers from Australia and South Africa, as well as from India, China, and Japan, must pass. The American finds it on his way in the tour round the world which seems to be a necessary detail of American education. To the Moslem—and the continuous expansion of the Muhammedan faith has planted them in every part of the world—the pilgrimage to Jerusalem is second in importance only to that to Mecca. To the Jew the country of Palestine represents not only the past, but also the future of his race.

The Moslem believes that on the Last Day Jesus Christ and his own prophet will judge the nations of the world in the valley which lies between the east wall of the Temple and the Mount of Olives. The Jew also believes that his race will rise from the dead in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and that even those who die in other lands must make their way there after death. Thousands of the Jews who come to

Jerusalem have no other wish than to die there.

Is there any spot on earth which has so magnetic an influence upon mankind?



THE GLAMOUR OF THE HOLY LAND



CHAPTER II

THE GLAMOUR OF THE HOLY LAND

THERE are some who never seem to come under the glamour of the Holy Land. There are even some, strange as it may appear to those who love its sacred soil, who are capable of going from Dan to Beersheba, and calling the land "barren."

It is, of course, obvious that people see what they look for; and rightly to see the Holy Land one needs some knowledge of history, sacred and profane; one needs the power of adaptation to the unfamiliar; one needs a sense of form and colour, which is something more than conformity to the received creed of the beautiful; one needs that wider outlook which can accept what

is new without the necessity for comparing it with the old. Yet it is not always the most learned, nor the most artistic, nor the most original, who find greatest delight in Palestine; it is rather those who are the children of the great god Glam, who look into the heart of things and see them in "the light that never was on sea or land," who can look backward to the childhood of the world, who can feel the consciousness that they are gazing upon the stage on which were played the greatest dramas of the world's history; that to a great degree in this country, and out of the genius of this country and of these races, were born the three great religions of the world; that it is in seeking to penetrate the mystery of place and people that—alone—one may hope to enter into that philosophy, psychology, mentality, which dominate the greater part of mankind; that—far as we may think ourselves removed from these Semitic peoples—it is their thought, experience,



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

A STREET OF ARCHES.

Showing the narrowness and the curious formation of some of the streets in Jerusalem. Most, however, are not high enough to admit the passage of camels.



inspiration which have given laws, divine and human, for all the world.

"Palestine is the best guide-book to the Bible," asserted one of our two great guide-books—Murray and Bædeker—at a period when both were in their prime. "The Bible is the best guide-book to Palestine," retorted the other, with equal truth. The spirit of reverence—reverence to God and man—is another attribute necessary to those who would rightly enter into the spirit of the land, a reverence that is not daunted by surface disappointments, surface discrepancies. One may perhaps feel the poetry exaggerated that called Jerusalem "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth," but one must be shallow and unsympathetic if one fails to enter into the spirit of patriotism which prompted the adulation, and very ignorant of history if one does not perceive the causes, ethical as well as racial, which led to such a point of view.

Yet, even for the ordinary traveller with his sketch-book and camera, for the average reader, the humblest Bible student, there are in Palestine infinite stores of instruction and delight. Fashion and "personal conductors" have found it convenient that he shall visit it at the beginning or end of his visit to Egypt, and he seldom sees the beautiful autumn days when the land is awakening from her summer sleep, so far are the seasons other than those to which we are accustomed. He often arrives in time for the cold which sets in after the early rains, and before the vernal sunshine and the "latter rain" have painted the landscape with the crimson and purple and gold of the spring flowers. There are some who complain that the country is bare and colourless, and yet to those who love it the pageant of the year is one of endless beauty. There are but two seasons, winter and summer, and the dividing line may be said to be the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles,



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

CROSSING THE FORDS OF THE RIVER JORDAN.

This is the alleged scene of the Baptism of Jesus.



the Harvest Thanksgiving, a movable feast, but which falls about the end of October or beginning of November.

All the harvest has then been gathered in, the wheat and barley long ago in April or May. Then came the various beans, herbs, cucumbers (in a variety of which we know nothing), vegetables, all of great value to the population, largely vegetarian; then the later cereals, the durra (millet), the sesame, the last not unlike a foxglove plant in appearance, and covering wide acres in the Plain of Sharon. In August and September came the cactus with its delicious refreshing fruit ice-cold on the hottest day, the dates, figs, pomegranates, golden and crimson, the locusts with their long dark pods against the deep green of the caroub-trees, the almonds, apricots, peaches, and, finally, the grape harvest.

The grape harvest is a time of marvellous beauty in Palestine. After the corn has been gathered in comes the period which

those call "bare" who are not alive to the exquisite delicacy of the colouring, faint and pale it is true, but a revelation to Western eyes of the possibilities of neutral tints. These are composed of the limestone rock and sunbaked earth, of the silver greys of the olives, of the half-naked outstretched limbs of the wide-leaved fig-trees, the first to flag beneath the summer sun; for colouring, a winter landscape set against a hot background of cloudless sapphire sky; while near at hand, one finds the deep vandyke-browns of the rich earth flecked and softened by a myriad of tiny blossoms, summer's latest gift, crowding about the roots of fig and olive and almond, not in great expanse of pure colour as earlier in the year, but with a friendly intimate beauty of delicate harmony, a liliputian feast spread only for loving eyes.

Gradually, as one looks out across the hills which enclose Jerusalem, the colouring changes as the vineyards attain their full



THE WELL IN THE OLIVE GARDEN.

There are few rivers in Palestine, and the mountain-streams are dried up for more than half the year ; consequently the most important feature of every village is the well.



ripe beauty. Many a vineyard tower, a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, a lonely ruin to the passer-by, becomes a scene of busy home life; women and children with the watchmen, the keepers of the vineyards, leave their village homes and enter into the joys of harvest-tide. A climbing gourd, like that of Jonah, a great rock, a ruined watch-tower, suffices for shelter from the sun by day, the dews by night. The ripe grapes are food and drink; there is no stint, little even of *meum* and *tuum*, they are the gifts of God. The necessary watching is against beast rather than man, against the "little foxes that spoil the grapes."

The vines are not raised in arcaded alleys, as in Europe, but lie prone upon the warm bosom of mother earth, so radiant with heat that the grapes are "coloured," even upon the under side, to a degree one would have supposed impossible. Jew and Christian carry them off for wine; the Moslem dries them for the familiar "sul-

tana" of commerce, and for home use in the coming winter; again, a charming and picturesque festival scene carried on, also in the vineyards.

The grapes plucked, the work of the year is over; the agriculturist population has realized the yield of the year's resources, and the time of domestic festivity begins. Night after night one hears the joyous outcry which proclaims a marriage-feast, with its climax, "Behold the bridegroom cometh," and the torchlight procession hastening out to meet him. The childlike, irresponsible Oriental, has a genius for festivities, a capacity for enjoyment of simple pleasures lacking among the more serious peoples of northern Europe; for the *shem el-hawa* ("to smell the air"), their favourite form of enjoyment, nothing more is necessary than fresh air and sunshine, the company of friends; bread, fruit, and cigarettes.

To this succeeds a period of some anxiety.

The time for ploughing is at hand; the sunbaked earth refuses the touch of the agriculturist; the cisterns are nearly empty; food for the cattle is hard to find. The days go by, and the heavens are "as brass."

"The Feast of the Jews is coming," the people say hopefully—Moslems and Christians alike, in absolute faith as to the issue. The harvest thanksgiving includes prayer for the fruits of the earth in due season. One would not dogmatize as to cause and effect; one cannot deny that in the course of nature rain is probable, just at this period; but the fact remains that when one leaves home to call upon Hebrew friends in their pretty green summer-houses, it is umbrella in hand, and mackintosh over the arm! The downfall, when it does come, is tropical; the rainfall in Palestine is said to be about equal to that of London; and as a rule from May to October, as well as for many weeks during the other months, there is not so much as a shower.

After the "early rains" one notices, in a very few days, that the entire landscape has been painted anew. The passing of the plough has renewed the tints of the faded fields; the existing colouring of trees and shrubs, of the red roofs of the modern houses, the greys and sepias of the old, are brightened and refreshed. And then, in a week or two, comes the matchless delight of the flowers.

"Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!" Among the earliest are the crocuses, then the narcissi and jonquils, which, in sheltered spots, are scenting the air in late December. But the glory of these early days is a glory of royal crimson. Anemones, adonis (called by the natives "blood drops," with the pretty tradition that they grew beneath the cross), ranunculus, tulips, poppies, scarlet flax, scarlet pimpernel, succeed each other, becoming mingled by degrees with the fainter pinks of cyclamen, and the later



THE JORDAN.

The beautiful river round which centres much of the historical interest constituting the glamour of the Holy Land.



anemone, and the rock rose. Then there are arums—purple and gold, and deep mysterious velvety black; there are the yellow flaxes, the yellow adonis, the yellow ranunculus, the rich cardinal purple of the gladiolus showing among the ripening corn, and an endless variety of orchids. For blue, we have larkspur and germander, myosotis, and a tiny arum, a miracle of dainty loveliness, yet so fragile one dare not gather it, though the temptation is great. Campanulas of every shade come next, and great open-eyed marguerites—white and yellow; and for those who know where to seek them, the English daisy, the honey-suckle, the wild rose. A specially interesting blossom is the mallow, of varying colour and habit, stalkless or several feet high, parent of the English hollyhock, introduced by the Crusaders, the "holy hocys."

You may carry home great branches of almond, of crimson pomegranate bloom, of

silvery olive, of wild mignonette growing several feet in height. You may make up your posies with wild asparagus, or dainty maiden-hair, which adorns the caves and rock-tombs within, as does the delicate "bridal-wreath" without.

All this we have and much, much more, to an accompaniment of song in which the bulbul is chief minstrel, but in which nearly every English songster takes his turn. Even the cuckoo calls aloud his name to wondering Arabs who, like the poet, regard him as "but a wandering voice."

And then the silences (!) the silence of midday, when bird and beast have sought rest and shelter; when even "the hot noise of bees" is still; when the shepherd and his flock have sought out the shadow of some great rock, and only the noiseless lizard basking on a stone, or a pariah dog stealing to his hiding-place, remain to show us that we belong to a living world.

The silence of the night is less complete.



A WATER-WHEEL IN THE BROOK CHERITH.

It is only by the use of such wheels that agriculture can be profitably carried on in Palestine.



It is the time of journeying, and the stillness is broken by the sound of camel-bells, heralding the stealthy tread of the laden beasts; by the patter of the donkey-caravans, the lesser bells of the mules, the weird, wild song of some Arab, fearless of man and beast, but giving voice to scare away the *jinn*—the spirits—not necessarily evil, which haunt the night.

Are there any such nights as in Syria? Can one elsewhere so realize the vast spaces of the universe? Surely nowhere else does creation appear so mighty a thing as under the Syrian stars! There is no after-glow of sunset. "At one stride comes the dark," and then, in the cloudless heavens, the stars rush out in multitudes and brilliancy which the untravelled can never picture.

In speaking of the glamour of the Holy Land, it is surely superfluous to dwell upon its history. It is the land "over whose acres walked those blessed feet." What it says to each of us of the great message of

God to man must remain among those unwritten records of the soul, with which no stranger hand may meddle. But there are other messages for the thinker, of which we are reminded at every turn.

The roads we walk upon, the bridges we cross, the milestones which direct our steps, the aqueducts we find in many a gorge—these we learn to speak of here as "merely Græco-Roman." To the north we have Damascus, the oldest city in history; to the south lies Petra, "a rose-red city, half as old as time." We may gather a handful of mosaics from a crusading church, a restoration probably of one built by Constantine or Charlemagne. We may watch the mourning Jews beside the remains of the Temple in which they testified to the unity of God, which a muezzin is now proclaiming from the neighbouring minaret; we may rest under a group of trees descended from the grove which earlier habitants planted "upon every high hill." We may



BOYS AT THE WELL.

The duty of the boys is to water the cattle of the neighbouring villages. This opportunity is also seized for personal ablutions.



enter the homes of the ancient Jebusites, whom the Israelites conquered with so much difficulty ; we may find works of art —exquisite glass, gems of marvellous workmanship, of Philistine and Phoenician ; we may point our cameras at monoliths and dolmens which may have been centres of worship for a yet earlier race.

Of the charm of the people themselves—their poetry, their folklore, their rare personal beauty, their strange and perplexing mentality, their quaint customs, interpreting for us so much of long past history—of their kindness, dignity, and hospitality, we shall have something to say in another chapter.



THE DESERT LIFE



CHAPTER III

THE DESERT LIFE

THE real indigenous life of the Holy Land is the life of the desert. It is in the desert that we find the modern Abraham, owner of flocks and herds, living in tents, which are moved from place to place according to season and the existence of water and of food for the animals. Quarrels arise, as in Bible times, as to the rights to wells and to pasture. There are alliances between certain tribes, hereditary enmity against others, just as when Abraham joined the battle of four kings against five; the "kings" being the *Shechs*, whose authority over their own people is seldom called in question. The women's portion of the tent is curtained off, as in the days

of Sarah or of Jael; they can hear all that goes on without being seen, now as then. Parts of the flock are often divided from the rest, and led away by certain members of the family, now, as when the brethren of Joseph went to feed their father's flock in Shechem and the lad was sent after them, and was cast into one of the empty cisterns which are still found all over the country, a yawning danger to man and beast—the "broken cisterns that can hold no water."

Many, who have not travelled, have a very imperfect idea of the appearance of a wilderness, and think of it as a vast expanse of level sand, wholly destitute of vegetation. A visit to the Wilderness of Judæa would at once correct such an impression. It is no flat plain, but is diversified with long ridges of sand-hills, around the base of which are paths, often winding, and greatly lengthening one's way, for they are so friable as to be impossible to



THE MOUNT OF TEMPTATION.

This unique photograph shows the summit of the Mount of Temptation and the Greek Convent and site of a very early church. The Plain of Jericho lies below.



climb. They are composed of sand, very loosely compacted together, and the surface of which is perpetually changing as the wind passes over it. Riding among them at night their weird fantastic shapes stand out against the starlit sky, and it takes but little imagination to fancy oneself wandering in some deserted city — some such scene as was in the poet's mind when he wrote of

> ". . . the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, . . ."

And then next morning, when daylight reveals the secrets of the night, one is disposed to finish the quotation,

> ". . . and, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a wrack behind. . . ."

The desert is not without its characteristic vegetation. In the Jordan valley there are many low growing bushes, which afford shelter for animal life, for birds of passage,

or the pretty little jerboa, which hops about like a tiny kangaroo; the branches are often whitened by the shells of sand-snails, and beneath them one may find the curious white eggs of various lizards. There are the shrubs which bear the fruit known as "Apples of Sodom," or "Dead Sea fruit," and which we all know in allegory; without, they are golden and rosy, within, one finds only a spongy substance, which, later in the season, turns to a powder, dull and grey. There is also the jujube-tree, with long thorns, the dread of the passer-by, but bearing a pleasant triangular fruit, which ripens about June and is refreshing and wholesome. Of smaller plants, the "Rose of Jericho" is the best known. The name is ironical, for the blossom has neither colour nor smell, and is scarcely distinguishable from the sand in which it grows. It is an æsclepiad, a member of a large family, of which this alone, the *Æsclepiad Syriaca*, is adapted for so strange



THE WILDERNESS OF JUDÆA.

The wilderness is not a flat plain. It is diversified by ridges of sandhills, the surfaces of which are formed into fantastic, ever-changing shapes by the wind.



an existence. There is one desert flower of really striking appearance, the orobanche, which, about April, flecks the golden sands with its yet more golden blossoms, pyramidal, leafless, standing some inches high, almost stalkless, a strange caprice of Nature.

There are many tribes among the habitants of the desert, having their characteristic differences in manner and appearance, which a knowledge of their history and conditions alone suffices to explain; and we can speak of them here only in general terms. Those with whom the ordinary traveller comes in contact are the degraded, half-gipsy people, who frequent the neighbourhood of towns or of such places as Jericho, where money is to be made out of the tourists by getting up—with the connivance of the dragomans—imitations of weddings, dances, and other festivals, whenever there is likelihood of an audience. They are ragged, squalid, greedy—a race regarded by the Bedu, perhaps in allusion

to their probably heathen origin, as "forty times accursed."

One must go far away from our own civilization to be admitted into that of a different people, and, moreover, one must go among them in an acceptable spirit; not to teach nor to "elevate" them, but to study without prejudice, to place oneself in sympathy with them, as did such men as Burckhardt, Musil, Doughty, and Euting.

When a guest arrives he will be received with the same hospitality as Abraham showed to his guests of old. Cakes will be baked upon the hearth, a lamb or kid will be slaughtered; the delicious *lebben*, or soured milk, will be given him to drink. If it be the dry season, and milk of sheep or goat cannot be had, then camel's milk, pleasant and refreshing, will be produced, for this is never made into *lebben*. Even if the guest be known to be fleeing from justice, or to be a refugee from some alien



IRRIGATING A GARDEN.

The Oriental has a great love of flowers, especially those which have a sweet scent. Gardens are among his favourite hobbies.



tribe, he has only to lay hold on the tent cords of his host, and he is safe, and will not be yielded up ; for the laws of hospitality are sacred.

On arriving at a Bedu encampment one always goes at once to the tent of the *Shech*, or head man, distinguishable by the lance, perhaps 15 feet in length, which stands beside it. The little village of tents is arranged in rows facing each other, or in a hollow square ; the flocks, unless they are out at pasture, in the middle. The tents, of black goat's hair, are fastened to the ground by cords attached to pegs. They are of various sizes, estimated by the number of poles necessary for their support. That of the *Shech* may have as many as twenty-four, arranged in rows of four, the tent being divided into two, or perhaps three, parts, for the men of the household, the women, and for such of the flocks as require special care. The master's favourite mare may be tethered to one of the tent-

pegs, or may be loose, and nosing about in quest of choice morsels.

In spite of some roughness in surroundings—which must not be estimated by the requirements of a different climate and of different habits—there is a certain degree of luxury. There are carpets and cushions which would be the envy of an artist's studio; your mattress is probably covered with rich silk; the women wear the "tinkling ornaments" of long ago; their very dress is designed to show that they belong to a class other than that of the toiling agriculturist.

If the encampment should be found at an oasis, the entertainment is more varied; there will be fruit according to the season, and vegetables, and an air of greater abundance. It goes far to explain the mystery of the "forty years'" wandering of the Beni Israel, as the Bedu would call the Hebrew tribes; that they probably stayed at each oasis till its resources were exhausted; that



A FELLAHA HOUSEWIFE.

She is sifting the corn, which must afterwards be ground between two flat stones before being made into bread.



each year they planted grain, which they stayed to reap, as do the desert races to-day.

Like the Israelites, before there was a special tent set aside for religious purposes, they have no place of worship; indeed, their religion is of a very elementary character, and in many cases begins and ends with their simple creed, "There is no God but God, and Muhammed is His prophet." Nevertheless, even so, one is thankful for the work which he did for his brethren of the desert—for the extirpation of a degraded idolatry, for the assertion, as by the Israelites, "The Lord our God is one Lord."

There are, indeed, certain Christian septs—that is, parts of tribes—who come up for devotion at the greater festivals, Christmas and Easter, to Madaba, a Christian town, in itself a colony of Kerak, which may be called the metropolis of the desert. The inhabitants are, for the most part, near

akin to the Bedu, with whom they are in frequent relation. This town, which stands among the hills east of the Dead Sea, was the very last place of the district to accept the Turkish rule, and for this reason is now the seat of a Turkish garrison, and has a certain incongruous air of civilization. At one time there was even an English mission station. It has been from earliest times a Bishopric, and there are still convents of the Greek and Latin Churches, with churches, dispensaries, and schools.

Simple as may be their religious creed, the Bedu have their own system of ethics. Of their hospitality and good faith to their friends and allies we have already spoken. They, moreover, set an admirable example in their respect for womanhood. Baldensperger, perhaps the greatest living authority on desert life, relates that in all his experience in Palestine he never met a Bedu who had more than one wife, and such



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL.

Probably a tax-gatherer returning from his visits to the villages. He is wearing the dress of a Bedouin, as suitable for travelling.



conduct as is described daily in the divorce proceedings of our journals is unknown among them. On the rare occasions upon which there is reason to believe that a woman has lost her character, the punishment is severe. One who has consented to her own dishonour is put to death with horrible details by her nearest relatives; should they fail to do this, the whole clan would be dishonoured, they would lose all civil rights, and would be unable to marry their daughters.

The removal of the many disabilities of Arab women is due to the higher ethical standard introduced by Muhammed; he it was who put a stop to the destruction of female infants, and who placed all believers upon an equal footing, which at once destroyed most of the worst conditions of slavery.

Love plays a considerable part in desert marriages, and it is to be remembered that the women are not secluded as in the

towns. When two young people desire to marry the father of the girl is approached, and should the proposition seem suitable—and the question of rank and family enter into consideration as well as that of means and conduct—the father will probably reply: "If her soul dwells in him, and his in her, I shall not separate soul from soul."

The men are considerate of the women, and in travelling they are set on camel-back, as their work on arrival in the camp is fatiguing, for to them naturally fall the household arrangements and cooking. The marriage settlements often amount to a considerable sum, payable in small cattle, though the daughter of a *Shech* will command a considerable addition in camels. The price of a maiden is double that of a widow, or of a woman who has been divorced, though, as has been seen, the fact of divorce does not, as with us, imply any accompanying circumstances of misconduct. A man who wrongs a woman,



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A GUEST-CHAMBER IN A BEDOUIN TENT.

The laws of hospitality are sacred in the desert. A guest is treated with the same courtesy as Abraham showed to his guests of old. Even if the guest is fleeing from justice he has only to lay hold on the tent cords of his host and he will not be given up.



even with her consent, must pay the "price of her virginity," that is, incur the same punishment as if he had killed a man. A man who desires his neighbour's wife asks him for her—for a consideration—and it is possible that, with the lady's consent, terms may be arranged, and a divorce granted. The new husband becomes responsible for whatever sum his predecessor has paid as "bridal price," plus—as in our own breach of promise cases—some balm for wounded feeling. There are many stories of love-lorn Bedu who have ruined themselves to attain their desires.

Sometimes a wife may wish, of her own accord, to leave her husband and return to her own tribe, a contingency which is also provided for. At the time her dowry is agreed upon, a forfeit, generally of double that amount, is arranged and sworn to in presence of witnesses, to be paid in the event of her forsaking her home. As this might conceivably lead to abuses on the

part of the husband, the father adds: "If, however, which may God forbid, thou maltreatest my daughter, I will take her back, and thy hand shall remain empty."

The customs of the desert also make provision against the possibility that, in consequence of caprice or tyranny on the part of the parents, the course of true love may fail to run smooth. The parents' permission is asked by the bridegroom's family, once, twice, thrice, each time augmenting the value of his offers. If consent is still refused without sufficient reason, the request is renewed, but with diminished inducements—a sheep or two, or a camel, or mare, being subtracted at each demand. When all are withdrawn the young pair take the matter in their own hands, and the father is regarded as having abandoned all property in the bride.

The weddings are celebrated with much ceremony, and last for many days. Liberal presents are made, dances performed, songs

and recitations continue far into the night, the bride is paraded upon the back of a camel, and receives the congratulations of her friends, which she accepts with conventional modesty, depreciating her bridegroom in terms often far from polite. The finale comes suddenly; true to her rôle, the bride —at a given moment—makes a feint of escape, and runs off into the desert. The husband must seek her out, taking with him provisions. For at least six days he alone knows of her hiding-place; in some tribes this period may extend to half a year. He has, meantime, made provision for her comfort—a new tent, with suitable furnishings, and all requisites. Upon her return to camp, rejoicings are renewed.

The Bedu are generally of attractive appearance, tall, lithe, with small heads beautifully set on the shoulders. They are very dark, from exposure to the desert sun; and the women are somewhat disfigured—to our eyes—by the custom of

tattooing the person, which extends even to the lips and chin. They are of silent and dignified manners; very courteous to those who approach them with an equal courtesy, but quick to resent familiarity in any form; and very different from the chattering, light-hearted fellaheen, whom they look upon as of a class very different from their own, with whom marriage would be entirely out of the question. It is by contact with the Bedu only that we can put ourselves into relation with the customs and modes of thought of the remotest antiquity of Bible times.

VILLAGE LIFE



CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE LIFE

THE very names of the Palestine villages must suggest pictures to the mind's eye of all those who belong to any Christian nation. The distinction which the Bible makes between towns and villages is founded upon the fact of their being fortified or no. "The houses of the villages which have no wall round about them shall be counted as the fields of the country," is the rule laid down in Leviticus. This accounts for the fact that, whereas the larger places seem to have generally stood upon a hill—convenient for observation of their approaches—we often find the villages hidden away out of sight in some valley, or in the folds of the hills.

Many places, which are now but villages, may have ranked as towns in ancient times; while others seem to have increased in importance, such as Bethlehem, Arimathea (Ramleh), and Nazareth.

While such names as Endor, Dothan, Nain, Cana, Bethel, remain unchanged, those of other villages have altered with the language or associations of new inhabitants. Thus Kirjath-jearim is now known by the Arab name of Abu Ghosh; Emmaus as Qoubeibeh—though a few doubt the identification; Shechem is now Nablous; Hebron is El-Khaleel, that is (the town of) The Friend (of God). Bethany is Lazarieh; Samaria is Sebaste. In some cases the Christian population keep up among themselves the name with which they have religious associations, as in the case of Qoubeibeh; in others, as Bethany or Hebron, it is the Arab name which best preserves the sacred tradition.

There are, again, certain modern names



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A BEDOUIN ENCAMPMENT.

Giving also a characteristic picture of the Wilderness of Judæa.



which convey some historical interest, such as Latroun, from *ladron*, criminal, the place said to be the birthplace of the penitent thief, whom tradition calls Dismas. The impenitent thief, by the way, is associated with the village of Lifta, near Jerusalem, still of doubtful reputation. The village in the "hill country," reputed to be that to which St. Elizabeth retired, and where the Baptist was born, is now known to Christians as St. John's, and to the Moslems as Ain Karim, "the Well of the Merciful."

There are certain features common to every village; the most important being the Well, which is the very reason for its existence. Palestine possesses few rivers, and the mountain streams—such as they are—are absolutely dry for the better half of the year. In the neighbourhood of almost every village may be found ruined cisterns, remains of better days, which a little expense of labour would restore; but

the present population is, for the most part, thriftless, and often idle and dispirited. The well is the centre of village life. All day long, but especially in the morning and evening, the women come backwards and forwards to fill their water-jar, gracefully poised upon head or shoulder, its beautiful outline, and grey or brown colouring, contrasting with the blue or white of the garments of the wearer.

These jars are for household purposes. Should a larger supply be needed, it is fetched by the men in water-skins made of the skins of sheep or goat. The seat of this manufacture is at Hebron. When Jesus said to his disciples, "There shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water," He was giving them a very explicit direction, for the sight of a *man* carrying water in anything but a skin is practically unknown in the East.

The well is also the village laundry, and here one may come upon a busy scene at



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A WOMAN WITH A WATER-JAR.

Notice the enormous pressure which she carries smilingly upon her head.



almost any hour of the day. The clothes, after being soaked, are spread out and beaten with stones. Hot water and, as a rule, soap, are unthought of, and the treatment is heroic; but so long as the materials are homewoven, homespun cloth, and the dyes—rich blues, greens, reds, for the most part—are of home manufacture, they not only endure, but continue for generations of wear. It is only when the march of "education" brings to the schools aniline dyes and European cottons that the dress of unknown centuries fails to meet its requirements; and the reign of fashion, corsets, slovenliness, and unseemliness begins. Picturesqueness becomes squalor, and grace and dignity are lost. The Ruths and Rachels and Marys, the Jacobs, the Josephs, the young Samuels, are turned into caricatures of 'Arry and 'Arriet, with but too often manners to match.

Meantime, let us rejoice in such village life as may still be found; at Bethlehem,

Nazareth, Ramleh, and other seats of civilization the change has begun; but there are still villages wholly Moslem, or where the indigenous Christianity bequeathed by our Lord and His disciples has been but little interfered with, and where beautiful ceremonial, full of teaching for the picture-loving, colour, light, music, allegory-loving children of the East, still affords delight as in the days before the Crusades began the work of "improvement."

The villager is essentially different from the inhabitant of the desert. The villages contain a much more mixed population, with the mixed attributes of the races which have combined to form it. It would be vain to deny the admixture of blood, euphemistically called "crusading," though much of it is considerably more modern, being derived from most of the Mediterranean countries, and perhaps from some farther north as well. Then there is that of the Arab conquerors, as well as of the



A NATIVE HOUSE AT GEZER.

Gezer is one of the ancient cities of Palestine. The site was discovered by Claremont Ganneau, a Frenchman, and has recently been excavated by the Palestine Excavation Fund.



older inhabitants of the country, with whom, however, the real Arab will not willingly intermarry; there are Copts and Moslems from Egypt, who settled principally in the plain of Sharon, when Ibrahim Pasha invaded Syria in early Victorian days; there are Turcomans, Mesopotamians, Kurds, who have all had their share in creating the mixed race now known as "Syrian," and from whom the Bedu stands proudly aloof.

They are a pleasant, light-hearted people; thriftless, capricious, hasty, quickly at enmity, quickly friends, often generous, kindly, helpful, but suspicious, money-loving, and utterly indifferent to truth. In the villages of the Lebanon, largely inhabited by Christians of the old Churches, less exposed to the changes of modern influence, one finds conditions so different that the people may almost be regarded as of another race; they are far more industrious, trustworthy, and, though even the average fellah is not wanting in quick-

ness of wit, more really intelligent. They are mainly Christians, although there is a large admixture of Druse element—a sect of Muhammedans—also a sober and industrious people. The local government is Christian, mainly of some variety of what is known as the "Greek" Church, which is not necessarily connected with the people of Greece, but denotes an Eastern branch of the Church Catholic, just as "Latin" or "Anglican" are used to denote Western branches.

The Libanese, in their desire for a wider field for their ambitions than their own mountains can afford, are much given to emigration, largely to Egypt and America. They are home-loving, however, and generally return when they have made a sufficiency. It is to them that we owe the beautiful silks and embroideries many of which have come to be identified with the name of "Liberty," and which are also known as products of Damascus. The silk is grown

largely in the Lebanon district, where, in almost every village, one may hear the whirr of the spinning wheels, and where the hill-sides are covered with the rich green of mulberry gardens. The weaving is done largely in Beirut and Damascus.

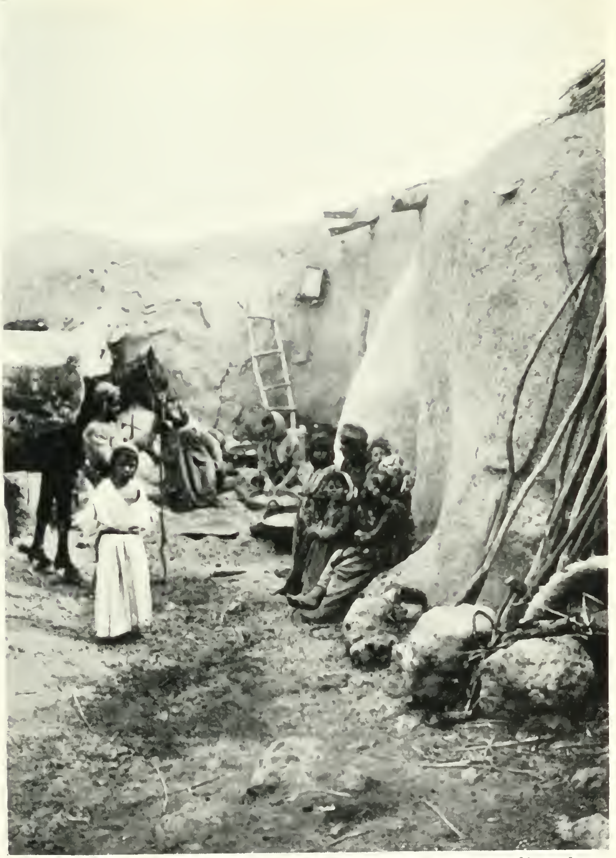
The fellaheen of Palestine proper are mainly an agricultural people. For the most part they sit under their own vine or fig-tree, though a few may be tenants, and even those who have land of their own also go out to work, either for the townspeople or for the Bedu. This last they do upon a sort of co-operative principle, in which the fellah contributes labour, and the other the ground and at least some part of the seed.

The women are workers as well as the men, and are unveiled and extremely independent. The fellah alone among the Moslem population has often more than one wife, woman's labour being a valuable asset to the agriculturist. She is as a rule

well aware of her own value, and expects a considerable dowry. Though they are often married very young, it is becoming far more common than formerly for women not to marry at all, or to marry at a much later age, for a fellaha is quite able to get a good living for herself, either in agricultural work or as domestic servant.

The women of Bethlehem and Beit Jala are in great demand as children's nurses, for they are very faithful to their charge, and being largely brought up in convent schools, have come into contact with Europeans, and are more clean and orderly than those of some other villages. In both places there are also excellent German schools, and many of the rising generation speak French, German, or Italian.

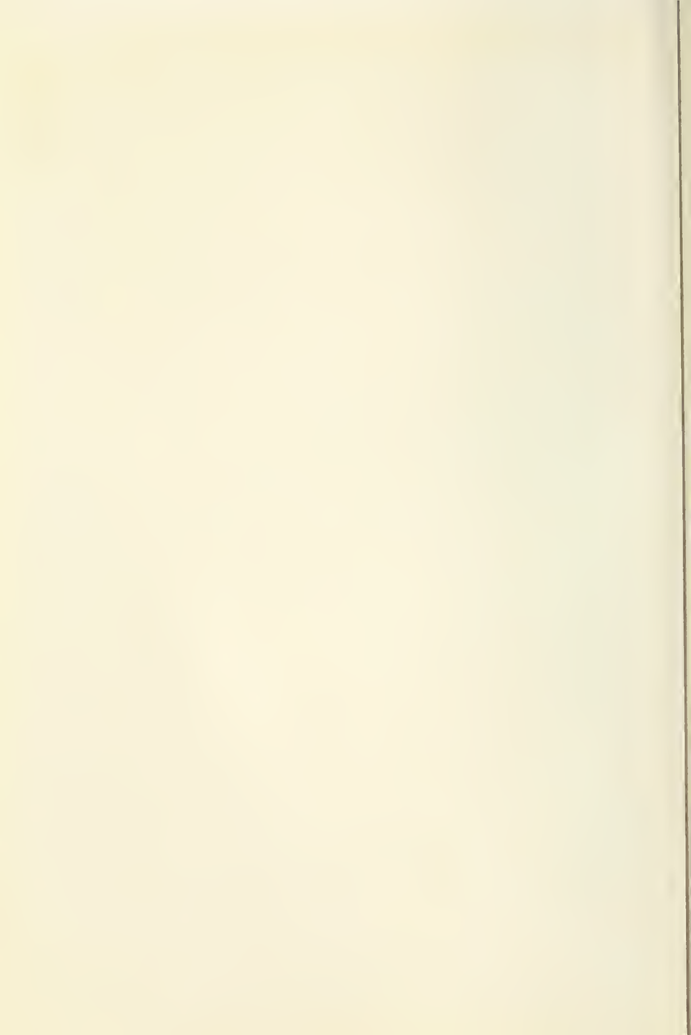
The women of Siloam, or as it is now called Silwan, an entirely Muhammedan village, are mostly gardeners, and earn a good living by the cultivation of salads, Jerusalem artichokes, and enormous cauli-



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

JEZREEL.

A native home in a village of Judæa. Domestic life is carried on in the open air, and the hut used for sleeping only in cold weather. Jezreel is the site of Naboth's vineyard, and was the home of Ahab.



flowers, for sale in the market of Jerusalem. They are often extremely capable, and like many Muhammedan women, have their husbands well in hand. We came across one who related with gusto that at a certain period of her married life the husband rebelled, and, having been divorced in haste, repented at leisure, and wished to make up the quarrel and enter his bonds anew. To this the lady agreed, but insisted upon having her dowry paid over again, so that she must have proved an expensive bargain. Apparently she was considered worth it! The fellaha is an excellent mother, and in some ten years' acquaintance with the country I have never come across a genuine case of cruelty to children; and it is with intense horror and incredulity that I have been asked by Moslems whether it can possibly be true that a society has had to be established in England for the protection of children from their parents! Perhaps the prohibition of drink among the Muham-

medans has something to do with it; one sometimes sees a Christian man the worse for liquor, but I have never heard of a woman guilty of such an offence. Moreover, so long as they keep clear of European drink, and take only the pure wine and even brandy of the country, the results are not very serious. The usual drink among the lower classes is arak, which is made from the dregs of the wine vats flavoured with aniseed.

The fellaha is often of fine physique, and, in some districts especially, of attractive appearance. The large full eye, small mouth, and abundant tresses praised in Arabic poetry are found especially in Bethlehem and Nazareth. The large bulk and hips, exaggerated by generations of squatting, are points which the Western eye does not appreciate.

The men are often of extraordinary strength, and their ability to bear weights is astonishing to the European. The more

than life-sized stone figure, which is almost a landmark in the Jerusalem district, upon the summit of the three-storied building known as the Ratisbonne School, was raised to its position by a single workman; and one may often meet a porter carrying a cottage piano, or an iron girder of the kind used in building! The women, too, are very powerful, and one asks with interest as to the nature of their diet. This consists largely of rice, vegetables—especially of the cucumber class—nuts, and the wholemeal bread of the country, which is unleavened, and baked in flat cakes, as in Bible times. Their one stimulant is coffee. The men smoke cigarettes—when they can get them—or the water-pipe, said to be the most wholesome form of smoking, though very trying to the uninitiated. Their principal meal is always at night, and meat is regarded as a festival diet, and on such occasions consumed in excess.

On the other hand, they are not, on the

whole, long-lived, and die often after very short illness, pointing to a lack of power of resistance.

Their clothing is entirely of cotton, except the one outer garment, which for women is a kind of drugget, for men, of camel or goat's hair, or, in some districts, of sheepskin, with the wool inside. This heavy outer garment is worn out of doors the year round, as protection alike from heat and cold. The head is always covered; the woman wears a close-fitting cap under her veil, which with its ornaments may weigh as much as eight or nine pounds. This she clings to day and night; and they aver that to lay it aside gives them headache. The fellah covers his head with equal care. The head is often shaved and covered with a cotton cap, which is again covered with the red tarbush which, in some form, is inseparable from the Turkish subject, and round this is wound a large handkerchief of coloured cotton in turban



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

GIRLS OF A CHRISTIAN VILLAGE.

These girls are occupied in field-work and as shepherds and goat-herds.



form, giving the head an overgrown appearance, which is less becoming than the hanging veil worn by the Bedu and by many fellaheen also. The element of weight is in this case supplied by the heavy rope of black goat's hair, as thick as a man's wrist, wound twice round the head, and with tassels which hang down behind.



TOWN LIFE



CHAPTER V

TOWN LIFE

WE have already seen that the old distinction between a town and a village was that a town had walls, and, presumably, fortifications. The walls of Jerusalem—rebuilt last by the Turkish ruler, Suleiman the Magnificent, about the time of our Queen Elizabeth—are still in great part complete. The last breach in them was made upon the occasion of the visit of the German Emperor, in order to afford the more space for a ceremonious reception, in acknowledgment of all which had been done by his subjects for the commerce and education of the town, as well as for its embellishment by the building of hospitals, churches, and schools. The walls

of Haifa, which lies at the foot of Mount Carmel, are relatively modern, the town having been removed from its former position in post-crusading times. Those of Tiberias date, with the town itself, from the Herods; those of Jaffa, razed by Napoleon, have been destroyed and rebuilt so often that to assign them to any one period would be impossible. For the fortifications of antiquity, one must look to such towns as Gaza, where the old masonry may still be observed where the sand has fallen away from the foundations. Excavation has also revealed the ancient walls of Jericho, Megiddo, Taanak, Gezer, Samaria, and other towns, which, however, are abandoned and forsaken; whereas Gaza is a flourishing city at the edge of the southern desert, whence are exported large quantities of barley for the manufacture of Scotch whisky!

The life of the larger towns is affected very greatly by the European element in



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

THE VILLAGE SPRING AT CANA OF GALILEE.

The women are filling their great water-jars as they filled them on the occasion of the Wedding Feast.



the population, and is entirely different from that of what may be called the native towns, such as Ramleh (Arimathea), Acre, Tiberias, or Safed. There are also a certain number of places visited by Europeans, but where there is no permanently resident Occidental population, such as Nazareth, Bethlehem, Hebron, which still—happily—preserve some characteristic features. Few places are so much visited as Bethlehem, and, moreover, the town is filled with schools, hospitals, and the convents by which they are supported; nevertheless, partly, perhaps, because there are no resident European officials, partly because there are no hotels, the people still wear their beautiful native dress, and to a great extent preserve their native customs. One may wander in the "Fields of Boaz," and be sure of meeting just such reapers as those among whom Ruth "stood amid the alien corn." The shepherds in "The Shepherds' Fields" are herding sheep in the

cave by night, as when Herod's castle frowned down upon the sleeping village; while across the hills, in Hebron, one may find giant grapes of Eschol, in vineyards tilled by lads in just such a coat of many colours as that which Jacob gave to his favourite Joseph in the same spot so long ago, although elsewhere the outer garment is almost always of the neutral hues of the goat or sheep which has provided it.

An essential feature of every town, as of every village, is the minaret, in number proportionate to the size of the place, whence the inhabitants are called to prayer. There is also, probably, a market-place, and quite certainly a fountain, which, besides all the purposes of a well elsewhere, may serve for religious ablution, a necessary preliminary to worship. The smaller houses are the same box-like structures which we have found in the villages, without chimney, and, as a rule, unenclosed. There are, however, in even the smallest towns, many



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

TOWNSWOMEN BUYING CORN.

The corn is brought in by the fellaheen from the villages, largely from Moab, and the frugal housewife busy it to grind at home.



buildings of two stories high, with tiled or, alas! corrugated iron roofs, and the many windows which are the delight of the native builder.

A town which is mainly Moslem—as distinct from Christian or Jewish—preserves its individuality longer than do those where the Christian influence is in the ascendant; partly perhaps because, until lately, there were many restrictions laid upon travelling, and it was difficult for the Moslem to leave the country; whereas the Christian population—able to compound for military duty—has for long had a tendency to emigration, especially to South America, South Africa, and the United States.

These, returning, have brought about among their own people a different standard of life, with in many cases the means to put it in practice. "To fix a parlour" is an ambition which results in the importation of a good deal of mid-Victorian furni-

ture, striped reps upholstery, and "Brussels" carpets, together with the cut-glass chandeliers and painted vases which enlivened the same period. I lately met a rich fellah who had gone a step further, and who, with great pride, showed me a gold tooth (wrapped in paper), at the same time pointing out the space which had been created for its reception, by the removal of one of his own excellent molars. Magnificent teeth—unless the owners have been in service with Europeans and have eaten innutritious bread and adulterated groceries—are the birthright of the Oriental. My friend, however, did not wish to show inferiority to a brother lately returned from America, so he had not merely got rid of the graceful and becoming dress of his country, the matchless native rugs and carpets, the embroideries made by his great-great-grandmothers, the absolutely beautiful household utensils of hammered brass and copper, but he had even disfigured his



BETHANY.

In the background stands a ruin of an old convent of Lazarists. It is built near a burial-cave which tradition avers to be that of Lazarus.



own handsome countenance, to put himself on an equality with the civilization of the Far West!

Even worse, because less frankly crude, is the artistic standard of the Levantiner whom one finds in every town. These have, as a rule, a would-be French flavour, which expresses itself in paper flowers, gilt clocks, mirrors, "fancy-work," chromolithographs, and toilets and jewellery which materialize the extremest fashion-plate and the most telling advertisement. They are, to the Nearer, much what the Eurasian is to the Further, East. They are mostly tradespeople and inferior officers of Consulates; their great ambition being to pass for European. The admixture of Greek, Italian, Polish, or French blood, often results in pretty features and colouring, but their physique is poor, and their gait and voices are unmistakable. They are educated as a rule in convents—Greek or Latin—and generally speak French with a

quaint accent which reveals the Arabic vernacular.

The homes of what may be called the Moslem gentry are, as a rule, inaccessible to the European, which accounts in some degree for the wild misstatements upon the subject which have somehow passed into history! All men are of course excluded, except from the outer apartment of the master of the house, and all women also, likely to attempt interference with the religious views of the occupants. Few who do enter can speak the language, and the most ludicrous misrepresentations are the result.

The Moslem does not put his money into banks, and often invests it in building. The houses are large, and the rooms spacious, consisting as a rule of rooms built round a large central hall, known as the "liwân," and which is the common sitting-room of all the occupants. This is the Hareem, or private part, and if there are two stories, is on the upper floor. Below are the apart-



American Colony Jerusalem.

AN ANCIENT FOUNTAIN NEAR THE MOSQUE.

It is much used by the Christian townspeople who cannot share the advantage of helping themselves from the great cisterns within the sacred area.



ments of the men of the household, and these alone "give" on to the street. If, as is usual in the older houses, there is no upper story, the men's part is a sort of outer annex to the main square. The clan feeling is very strong among the Moslems, a survival from nomadic times. The household consists probably of the head of the family and his wife; it is very rarely that he has more than one. Even the Sultan is said to have but one, and the Khedive has but lately married a second wife, a European. When a son marries, he brings his wife home, and a room or two are added, if needed. The woman is never required to get her own living, so long as any sort of male relative is alive, and the household may be further increased by widowed daughters, sisters, aunts, or cousins. There are always plenty of servants about, relics of the old slave system, who have refused to leave the families in which they have lived for generations.

I have known households which consisted of forty or more persons, of all ages; and even if the Moslem woman were, as tradition relates, restricted to her own family for companionship, she commonly sees more persons in a day than those of us who have our liberty. Of liberty also she has her share. The climate lends itself to an out-of-door life, and one of the great features of the life of a Moslem woman is the *shem el-hauer*, the "smelling the air," or, as we should say, picnicking. Several families—women and children—agree to meet at some pleasant spot under the trees, and there they spend the day. Much time also is spent in paying calls, when they entertain each other with talk, music and cigarettes, the elder women, especially in the north, smoking water-pipes.

Of course there is the dark side of the life as well. Many of the older generation can neither read nor write, but they are conscious of their disabilities, and the rising



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

The walls and ruins of the town of Tiberias date from the time of the Herods.



generation bids fair to grow up with many accomplishments. Even before the change in Government gave liberty to the people of Turkey, great numbers of the daughters of the Moslem gentry were receiving education. Some thirteen years ago the Girls' School of Jerusalem was handed over, by the muncipality, to the care of a Social Community known as the "American Colony," while for many years past others have sent their daughters to various Convents for instruction.

The choice has, in neither case, been dictated by religious proclivities, for to the Moslem a Christian is a Christian, irrespective of creed, but by the fact that in the one case they have to deal with those who thoroughly understand their language and their needs, and in the other by the respect which they pay to what they consider the modesty of the religious dress, and the practical nature of the instruction offered, which includes all those domestic arts which

they acquire so gladly. The Oriental lady is as a rule a good cook, very clean and orderly in her household arrangements, and very willing to improve herself in all handicrafts, in which she often shows a singular gift and taste.

The Muhammedans are generally home-loving, and extraordinarily devoted to children, who are as a rule somewhat spoilt. It is part of the personal dignity which they so carefully preserve that this affection is never exhibited in public. The same dignity and reserve applies also to the ladies of the household, and it is not etiquette for even a woman to inquire after a man's wife in public. One does not ask after the sitt—that is, the lady—but rather in general terms after "the family."

That the desire of the men for a wider education must lead to great advance in opportunity is obvious. The establishment of the two great colleges, Jesuit and American, in Beirut, in the latter part of last



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

IN THE COUNTRY OF THE GADARENES.

A scene on the shores of Lake Tiberias, with oleander bushes in the foreground.



century was the greatest advance ever made in the direction of education in Syria, as they have enabled Moslem and Christian alike to qualify for the higher professions; and well-trained native doctors and lawyers are to be found all over the country, as well as immense numbers of clerks, journalists, and teachers, who find employment in Egypt, Constantinople, and even as far as Paris and America. The great multiplication of Arabic journals and periodicals all over the world has offered new outlet for the subtle brain and adaptable capacity of the younger inhabitants of Syria, whom one now finds in every part of the world. As might be expected, the wider culture has aroused a new spirit of patriotism, and the better educated classes are now taking pride in their nationality and racial characteristics, and even awakening to a sense of the beauty of their own arts and handicrafts.

The Oriental has a great love of flowers, especially those that have a sweet smell,

and the Moslems of the wealthier classes very often have a house in the country where they cultivate gardens, and where the ladies and children of the family spend the summer months. For the same reason there is now a tendency among those of the towns—Jerusalem, Jaffa, Damascus, and Beirut more particularly—to possess new houses outside the town, where there is space to build in more modern fashion. This leads, in some degree, to other changes, and a more individual style of home life, the aggregated families tending to separate and to live in greater privacy. The strong clan-feeling remains, however, and one often finds that the old ancestral home is kept up as a sort of family club, at which the men meet when on business in town.

Some of these old houses are very interesting, with carved façades, inlaid marble flooring, and an entire suite of chambers devoted to the bath, with its hot and cool



A BREAD VENDOR.

The boy is buying wholemeal bread, baked in flat unleavened cakes as in Bible times.



rooms, and fine old basins, often with the decoration which we have learnt to call Saracenic—to be found now only in the older mosques and baths.

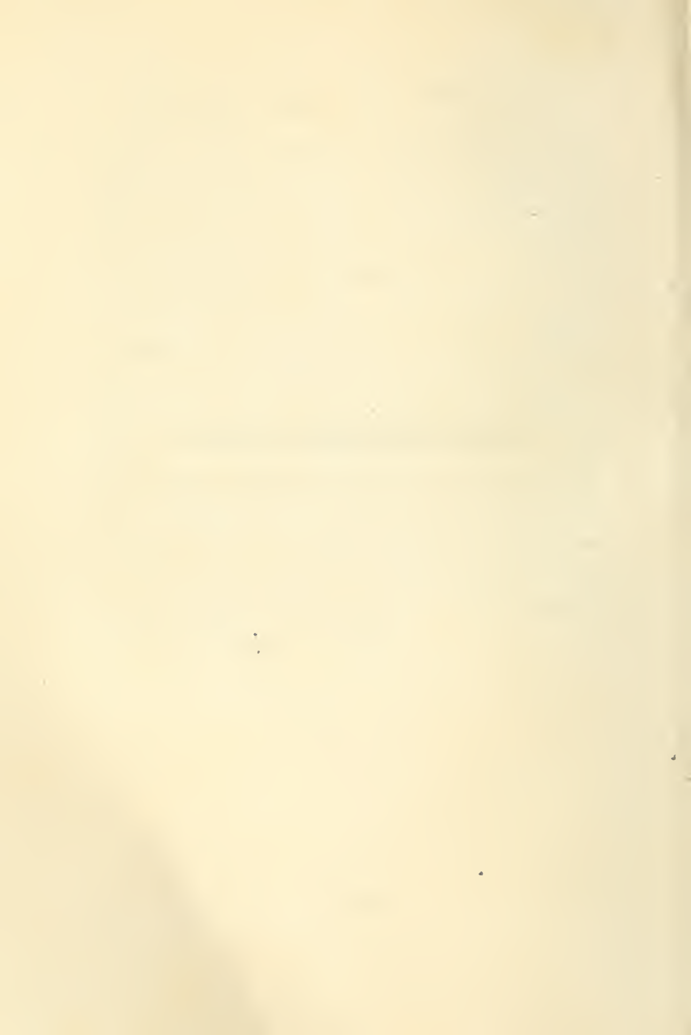
There are many ways in which travelling leads to enlargement of notions, and it is enlightening to hear the criticism of the Oriental upon the European lack of cleanliness! Not only does the "Frank" eat with unwashen hands, but when he does wash, it is with dirty water! They themselves would never think of using water in a basin in which the hands have already been immersed. They continue to pour on fresh water all the time. One may meet in the train from Jerusalem to Jaffa, for example, a party of fathers of lads at some European Christian school, going down to take them to the bath so as to ensure their being purified from time to time, in spite of the disadvantages of their surroundings!

Riding on horse-back, or on donkeys, or camels, is the national mode of motion, but

in the towns the men make great use of hired vehicles. The Pashá and some of the military officers have carriages of their own, but these are Turks, and have brought the habit from Constantinople.

One sees few Turks in the Holy Land, though it is a province of Turkey. They are, as a rule, pleasant and well-mannered, both men and women of attractive appearance, fair, and of well-cut features. The ladies wear elegant Parisian toilets, covered out of doors by the same double mantle as is worn by the working-classes, but of more costly material, the face-veil being of black gauze, more becoming than the figured muslin of the Arab ladies.

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE



CHAPTER VI

THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

THE saying that "Muhammedanism is a policy, and not a religion" has in it a certain grain of truth. The Arab submits to the rule of the Turk, though displeasing to him in a hundred ways as that of an Aryan race, a European nation, a people of another mentality from his own, because the Sultan represents for him the head of his religion as well as his ruler. He is, so to speak, not merely the King, but the Archbishop of Canterbury as well.

It is difficult to make the Palestinian, whatever his race, realize that this is not the usual arrangement, and many a "convert" has been bitterly disappointed to find that baptism did not make him free of the

British Consulate, as well as of the Mission Chapel. We hear much, and correctly enough, about the great extension of the Moslem faith, which is making converts in various countries of Africa, Asia, America, and even of Europe. In many nations, however, this does not necessarily involve any complexity of religious conviction; the Muhammedan creed is simple: "There is no God but God, and Muhammed is His prophet." If, as is also alleged, Muhammedanism has been specially adapted to the peoples by whom it has been in modern times embraced, such adaptations have been in things commercial and social, rather than religious.

The Muhammedan is devout, at least, in externals; the depth and sincerity of his religion probably varies with the individual, as among those of other creeds. In the streets, the shops, the Government offices, you may see men kneeling at the hour of prayer, regardless of witnesses. I have



A FAVOURITE RECREATION.

A group assembled outside a coffee-house drinking coffee, smoking nargileh, and enjoying a friendly gossip.



known a lawyer—even a tax gatherer—in the middle of a business interview, take out his watch, and select a long or short cigarette, even cut one in half, according to the amount of time at his disposal before the hour of prayer. When the moment came he would politely say, "Excuse me," throw his overcoat down on the floor, kneel with his face to the south—towards Mecca—make his devotions, and resume the business in hand with as matter-of-course an air as an English clerk who has interrupted a conversation to speak at the telephone. At least they are not ashamed of their religion.

Public places, such as Courts of Law, the Baths, and Philanthropical Institutions are adorned with religious sentiments adapted to the purpose of the building. The sentiments of the Koran, upon which the laws are founded, are often of great ethical beauty; and if we add that the Muhammedan does not always live up to his religion, we may

equally remark that he is not alone in that. It is, however, to be observed that the march of civilization has introduced a tendency—with some on mere grounds of fashion, with others as the result of reading the literature of other nations—to question their own faith, while having nothing to put in its place, with atheism as the result. The modern missionary should possess, not merely pious intentions, but a thorough knowledge of the literary and religious criticism of the day in many languages, if he would attempt to meet the subtle inquiring Oriental upon his own ground.

As among the Jews, the religious duties of the women are those of private life, and those who frequent the public service of mosque or synagogue, remain unseen in a special gallery or enclosure. The women, like the men, often carry a rosary upon which they recite, even in the intervals of conversation, the attributes of God: "God the Merciful, God the Compassionate, the



THE TOWER OF THE FORTY MARTYRS.

The tower and the ruins of a very early Christian church are found at Ramleh. This town is supposed to be the Arimathea of Bible history.



Ruler, the Holy, the Faithful," and so on, to the number of ninety-nine. The prayers at fixed hours are not compulsory upon them as upon the men, but I have noticed them engaged in spontaneous prayer in moments of danger, or excitement, or of special need.

I speak only of the upper classes; the fellaheen are not only more ignorant and indifferent, but often less sensitive to emotion and sentiment, much like the lowest classes among our own labouring population in town or country. Perhaps the fact that it is with such that the European abroad is most likely to come in contact, accounts for the nature of stories current as to the Muhammedan woman in her religious, as in her social life.

In all classes one finds a great deal of superstition, but it is as ignorant as it is unfair to treat it as part of the Muhammedan faith. One might as well say that the superstitions of the Highlands were

a part of the teaching of Presbyterianism. Indeed, there is much in Palestine to remind one of the Highlands, and in particular the form of the superstitions.* There is the same custom of associating everything with the will of God; the same habit of special forms of prayer for all occasions; for all details of household work, when crossing a threshold, when taking flour from the bin, when rising or sitting down, or going to bed, when pouring out water, or raking the fire, and so on. There are hauntings of wells and lakes and rivers; there are places lucky and unlucky; there are fairies in Scotland and jinns in Palestine; there are healing wells, and colours that are lucky and unlucky, and means of averting evil and of attracting good: and if such methods are not always alike in kind, it is often the means at hand, and not the sentiment, which differs most.

A man seeking a young woman in mar-

* *Cf.* "Outer Isles," chap. xi. (A. Goodrich-Freer(.



THE DAMASCUS GATE.

The city walls show the architectural style of the sixteenth century. This is the most impressive of the many gates of Jerusalem.



riage will ask whether she is in the habit of "mentioning" (*i.e.*, the name of God), over all her domestic tasks, as that alone will secure blessing to the household. Such things are "not of the Faith" (*laysa min ad-din*) they will carefully explain—as carefully as the Celt, who would not for worlds tell "the meenister" that it was the coloured threads round his cow's tail and not mere change of pasture or doctor's stuff which improved the quality of the milk. It is all "folk-lore," and the degree of toleration it receives is a matter of race and temperament, as well as of civilization.

We may find proof of this in the curious catholicity of many of the superstitions in a country which, like Palestine, has a population so varied from the religious point of view, which is not only Moslem, Jewish, and Christian, but almost every subdivision of these three religions as well. There are certain superstitions which are accepted by all, others which are of less universal estima-

tion. Moslem as well as Christian mothers, though not Jewish, will possess themselves of the little cakes of earth from the grotto or cave at Bethlehem in which, it is said, that some drops of milk from the Virgin mother fell to the ground; on the other hand, certain amulets in use by Jewish mothers to divert the attention of Lilith, Adam's first wife, from their offspring, would not be used by the others, while all alike feel confidence in the therapeutic virtues of a certain cave on Mount Carmel associated with the prophet Elijah.

The outline of a hand, generally in blue paint, upon the door or wall of a house, marks it as Jewish or Muhammedan, for both races have confidence in the protection afforded by this recognition that life and property are in the hand of God; while an egg or a piece of alum over the entrance might be Christian or Muhammedan, the one as indicating the life principle, the idea of continuity; the other as a symbol of

MUHAMMEDANS FILLING THEIR WATER-JARS IN THE TEMPLE AREA AT JERUSALEM.



preservation, as substances are preserved by salt.

At the Feast of the Assumption, in August, the slope of the Mount of Olives and the upper part of the Kedron Valley become the background, for some eight days or more, of a curious scene. Hundreds of tents are set up, and hundreds of families, Muhammedan as well as Christian, are encamped there in order to visit, at frequent intervals, the Tomb of the Virgin, close by the Garden of Gethsemane, to which they bring children and sick persons for physical as well as spiritual advantage. The Muhammedans, as well as every branch of the Oriental Church, have their special praying places within the chapel, which, like so many in Palestine, is a grotto or cave, lighted at such times, by hundreds of lamps, silver and gold, some of great beauty and value.

There are places of Christian pilgrimage all over the country too well-known to enumerate, but of which Jerusalem, Beth-

lehem, Nazareth, and the Lake of Galilee are the chief. The Moslems, too, have their holy places, the Mosque (on the site of the Temple) of Jerusalem being the most sacred, ranking, indeed, next to Mecca. The grave of Moses, which they place east of the Jordan, comes next; another is the grave of Reuben in the Philistine plain. The Jews venerate as holy the cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed.

One consequence of the multiplicity of creeds in Palestine is the complexity of the kalendar in use. That of the Turkish Empire is, like our own, founded upon the dates of its religious festivals. The year is lunar, and contains 354 days, and the era is counted from the Hejira; thus the year 1912 of our era is 1330 of theirs. Muharram, the first month, varies by eleven days each year from the date of our solar year, so that in a hundred years they gain upon us by about three. The month, like the day, begins at sunset; the ninth month



AN HISTORIC SPOT.

Camels drinking at the Brook Cherith. They have probably been driven many miles to enjoy this opportunity.



is a month of fasting from dawn to sunset, and is followed by the feast of Beiram.

The Oriental Church follows the Julian Kalendar, and the Jews also have their own.

Thus, when we were keeping Christmas Day, 1911, the Oriental Churches were at December 12, with the exception of the Copts, who had reached the 16th. The Moslems had reached the fifth of Muharram, 1330, and the Jews the 4th of Tebeth, 5672. As the Oriental day begins in the evening, there is also a difference in time which, as it depends upon the hour of sunset, varies from day to day, but is, roughly speaking, about five hours in advance of ours.

No picture of Palestine life would be complete without some realization of the interesting variety of the forms of the Christian faith which a common interest has assembled at this centre of a common hope.

The Eastern Churches are, of course, greatly in the majority; their differences are largely local, the creed—and to a great extent the rites—being the same. The Syrian Church, perhaps the oldest of all, and still using Aramaic as their ritual language—akin to that spoken by our Lord Himself—is to be found mainly in the north, though a small body, with their own bishop, remains in Jerusalem. The Copts is from Egypt, the Abyssinians and Armenians have their own Churches in Jerusalem.

These are all varieties of what is known as the "Orthodox" Church, said to number some hundred millions, mainly in East Europe and Palestine, who hold fast to the Œcumenical Councils, together with some six millions more, who reject them in one or more particulars. The main body of this Church is known to us as the "Greek," in distinction from the Latin Church, or, as we commonly call them, Roman Catholics.



PILGRIMS RETURNING TO JERUSALEM.

A group of Russians who have returned from a pilgrimage to Jericho and the Jordan.



Of these there is also a large number in the Holy Land, mainly in the towns; and there is, moreover, a considerable number of what are called "Uniats"—members of the old Oriental Churches who are in allegiance to the Pope while preserving many points of their old faith, such as the use of their vernacular, Communion in both kinds, and marriage of the secular clergy.

Those who are officially called "Protestant" are mainly Lutherans, including a large body of Germans known as "Templars," as well as the adherents of the Moravian Mission. The Anglicans are not numerous; they include some Jews known as "Hebrew Christians" and a few who have been taken over from the older Christian Churches. To convert a Moslem is practically an impossibility, though one is glad to believe that the native population has benefited in many ways, moral and material, by the immense number of Hospitals, Schools, and other institutions

to which almost every nation of Europe has contributed its quota.

Palestine is a country to which—to borrow an expression Zangwill made use of in regard to the Jews—"the rich have given unscrupulously"—the superfluity of charity being all the greater now that the people themselves have become more self-respecting, and in consequence of the new régime more independent. In Jerusalem, for example, there is an English Hospital for the conversion of the Jews, two very large French Hospitals, four German, including the only one for lepers, a Russian, and Dispensaries in connection with at least a dozen Convents, nurses, too, for the poor in their own homes. There are two Eye Hospitals, one English of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and the other German. In spite of all this organization, of which all except that of the Franciscans is of recent date, the native Christians, Jews and Moslems are making provision for themselves.



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

NAZARETH.

In the distance lies the brow of the hill from which the Jews sought to cast down Jesus.



There is a large Hospital belonging to the Orthodox Church, under the protection of the Greek Patriarch, and countless Jewish Institutions which in variety outnumber those of all others, and which in efficiency stand very high; moreover, the Moslems, in spite of difficulties peculiar to themselves—mainly the impossibility of employing their women in public work—have long had a large Hospital of their own, which they have handed over to the care of the French Sisters of Charity, who also care for their prisoners, and nurse their women in their own homes.

The same holds good with regard to education. Native Christians, Jews, and Moslems all now have schools of their own, which they are trying to bring to a state of high efficiency. They recognize that many of the foreign schools have tended to shake the patriotism as well as the religion of the rising generation, largely by ignoring their language. This was endured with more or less patience so long as the lack of

a Constitution made the establishment of native institutions difficult, and, moreover, made it almost necessary to look to Egypt and America for the means of living. Now that other fields are opening, the people recognize that, except in the case of those German Institutions which insist that every boy shall acquire a trade, the result of education was mainly the acquisition of foreign languages and the multiplication of dragomans, a life neither edifying nor, in the long run, remunerative.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE HOLY LAND



CHAPTER VII

SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE HOLY LAND

THE Holy Land is an interesting problem from whatever point of view we regard it—social, religious, or political. It is a country definitely and distinctly "on the move," but it would be more than rash at present to say in what ultimate direction. Until quite lately it seemed as if the forces of Zionism would sweep all before them, but it has been very interesting, since the crisis of 1908, which gave a Constitution to Turkey, to watch the growth of an opposing spirit of patriotism in the inhabitants of Palestine. Indeed, the country has afforded a valuable object-lesson of the close association of that spirit with the opportunity of cultivating the virtues of hope, of liberty, and of independence.

Formerly it was vain to seek to arouse the spirit of self-help; vain to urge the people, however personally ambitious, to act for themselves. "Why always depend upon those alien in race, religion, and sentiment for your schools and your hospitals? Why allow your children to lose their national dress, religion, sentiment? to be brought up, in many cases, mere second-rate copies of not always first-rate Europeans?" The answer, whether from Moslem or Christian, was always the same: "If we could get firmans (Government licences) for our Institutions, as the foreigners do, we would soon be independent!" This was no mere talk; the very week that the Constitution was proclaimed a "Constitutional School" was planned, and shortly opened, in Jerusalem, by young men of "the Committee of Union and Progress," Moslem, Greek and Latin, who would, however, be the first to acknowledge that it was by attendance at European



SHEPHERDS AT BETHLEHEM.

The coat, "abbai," which they wear is the garment, which, in the case of Jesus, was "without seam." This is a costly distinction.



schools that they were enabled to become teachers themselves.

No place has profited more from the advantages offered by foreigners than Beirut, where the two Colleges, Jesuit and American, have for many years educated most of such youth of the country as have received any higher education at all. Even here the people are doing something already for themselves. The Bishop of the Greek Church—a native of the country—is establishing large schools for boys and girls, where they will learn their own language and literature, and take pride in their race.

It would be easy to multiply instances; perhaps none shows better the advance in the possibilities of civilization than the foundation—also as a result of the Constitution—of a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. For years—at intervals—some two or three persons had sought to bring this about, always to be told by the European residents that,

bitter as might be the necessity of enforcing the regulations which already existed, it was hopeless and useless to attempt to do so. Now an active and effective society exists, of which the Governor of Jerusalem is president, and which has already built a hospital for injured draught-animals, out of the proceeds of the fines taken by the Muncipality during the three years which have elapsed since its foundation.

The Jews, with that capacity of adaptation which has made their nation what it is this day, and is indeed that which has made possible its continued existence, have known how to turn to their own account this new spirit, which at one time seemed likely to put a check upon their progress in the Holy Land. They, too, have adopted the rôle of patriotism, perhaps it would not be too much to say of Turkish patriotism; for although it is to the soil itself that their affection is given—naturally enough—the actual effect is that of devotion to the



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

THE JEWISH WAILING-PLACE AT JERUSALEM.

Twelve Jews form a "congregation." The group in the background are reciting the beautiful Litany which is used every Friday evening.



interests of Turkey. Large numbers, especially among the ever-increasing body of Russian immigrants, have become Turkish subjects, while many others—though remaining under the protection of some European country—have taken to the wearing of the *tarboosh*, the sign of the Turkish subject. They are thus enabled to further their own objects while appearing, genuinely enough, to have a stake in the welfare of the country. In population they outnumber very largely all the other inhabitants of Judæa put together; and although many of the immigrants belong to the class of undesirable aliens, the Jews have, nevertheless, brought about a most beneficent change in the face of the country.

Jerusalem was naturally the centre of their hopes and activities; and the Institutions, provided by the liberality of the Jews of Europe and America, seemed devised to meet their every need. They have schools of quality undreamed of before, except

among the German population, whose example they have followed, in confiding their educational institutions to University men and educated women; they are under the same conditions and requirements as would obtain in similar institutions in Germany, or, in the case of their School for Girls, founded by the Rothschilds and largely aided by the Montefiore family, in England. They have several hospitals, in one at least of which we find every advantage that science and benevolent devotion can supply. They have the only poor-house, the only mad-house, the only asylum for the aged, the only public Library, and the only School of Art.

Lately, however, they have seen the wisdom of decentralizing their efforts, and are largely developing their already very successful work of bringing the country back into cultivation. Like the Germans, they have large agricultural colonies in the Plain of Sharon, and are yearly increasing



THE CITY OF DAMASCUS.

One of the chief industries of Damascus is the weaving of beautiful silks and embroideries from the silk grown in the Lebanon district.



the acreage of horticultural produce as well. They have added considerably to the varieties of fruit under cultivation, and even to the chance traveller there is a continuous change perceptible in the landscape, as year after year the hillsides are more and more covered with vineyards, oliveyards, orange-gardens and orchards, where but lately all was desolate and bare.

The fact that Safed and Tiberias are among their sacred cities has drawn Jews to the north of Palestine, and here, too, they are acquiring land in every direction. A very large and scientifically complete Technical School, mainly of agriculture and horticulture, is being organized in Galilee, upon the same lines as those which the Germans, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and the Jews themselves, have carried on for many years in the district between Jerusalem and Jaffa.

It will have been observed that the German influence is very strong in all parts

of the Holy Land. In Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Haifa there are thriving German colonies, which have an existence quite apart from those Germans who, like other Europeans, are intermixed with the town populations for purposes of commerce or religion. These colonies were originally founded by the "Templars," a religious body which may be said to correspond in some sort to our Society of Friends, and who by their industry and personal piety have firmly established themselves in villages which they have themselves built, and which are a valuable object-lesson to the native inhabitants of the country.

Their homes are picturesque, standing in productive gardens; their streets wide and well planted; water and sanitation are duly arranged for. They have their own institutions of every kind, and are a valuable addition to the population of the neighbourhood, as they are the artisans of the district. They are the builders, black-



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

A WATER-CARRIER.

When a larger supply of water is needed than a woman can carry in a jar, a man fetches it from the well in a skin.



smiths, gardeners, mechanics, soap-manufacturers, wine-makers, brewers, and to a great extent the hotel-keepers and clerks of the country. Germans keep most of the European shops, and do a large proportion of the banking and of the export trading of the country.

Among the Consuls in various places, it will commonly be found that the Swedish, Norwegian, and Dutch Consuls are German; and the German and Austrian post-offices carry the letters for several countries besides their own, England and America included. Russia, France and Italy have their own post-offices in Jerusalem and Jaffa; though, on account of custom-house duty, all parcels go through the Turkish post. Most of the railways in the country have been built by French or German engineers. It was for the expected arrival of the German Emperor in 1898 that roads were made, bridges built, and improvements carried out wherever his visits were looked for.

We have to remember that the Holy Land is not a mere Turkish province inhabited by Arabs, but a cosmopolitan gathering of the peoples of every continent on the earth's surface. To any other rule this would present a complicated series of problems, political and religious, which are now greatly simplified by the fact that to the present government the world presents but two classes, political or religious—Moslems and non-Moslems; though they differentiate Christians from Jews, and for political purposes distinguish between Catholic and Protestant, however incorrect may be the result.

To the Moslem, for instance, the Holy Sepulchre is a place of worship for Christians, which he himself also regards with reverence, though he believes us mistaken in supposing that Jesus was put to death, so that there are other of our holy places which he prefers to this—the Tomb of the Virgin, for example. Of all these



American Co *Jerusalem.*

BEDOUIN WOMEN.

These consider themselves of higher caste than the fellaheen, with whom they never intermarry. They have fine features and magnificent hair, and receive much more consideration in their homes.



places the Sultan is the ultimate owner, and indeed many, such as the Chamber of the Last Supper, the Church of the Ascension, the spot where "Jesus wept," are no longer churches, but mosques, though we are allowed access to them and even certain facilities for worship. What would become of our privileges should the Jews or any Christian nation come into possession? In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for example, are altars belonging to Latins, Greeks, Armenians, Abyssinians, Copts, Syrians, and to some of the Uniat Churches as well. Would any Christian Church be sure to defend the rights of so many confessions with the impartiality which is now shown? And have we any right to disturb the faith of Churches which existed long before our own, whose creed is the same as ours, and who were giving to the world theological literature when the inhabitants of the British Isles were wearing woad? It is surely, however, a privilege and a natural

outcome of our gratitude for all which the East has given us if we help to elevate and educate those less advanced in culture, moral and intellectual, than ourselves, and in work such as this very much remains to be done.

As we have seen, the Turkish Government has always shown a spirit of breadth and tolerance which many a more advanced nation might do well to imitate. They have permitted the presence in Palestine of the Latin Mission, represented by the Franciscan Order since the thirteenth century. In 1847 the Patriarchate, which had been founded during the Frank kingdom, was revived, and a great number of religious orders have since established convents, generally with schools and dispensaries attached, all over the country in towns and villages. A great part of the work of the Patriarchate has been the training of native priests, schoolmasters, and of women teachers and nurses to work

among their own people. In 1849 the first Anglican Church was consecrated in Jerusalem, representing the joint Bishopric of the English and Lutheran Churches. This arrangement did not last long, and in 1887 the Bishopric was established on new lines, and a handsome Collegiate Church has since been built with schools and a small Nursing Institution attached. There are also various missionary societies, English and American. The Germans, Protestant as well as Roman Catholic, have schools everywhere, and excellent hospitals all over the country, in charge of Kaiserswerth deaconesses, or of other religious orders.

The new constitution which has brought freedom to the Turkish subjects could scarcely add to that enjoyed by immigrants from foreign countries. Even England herself, the refuge of the outcasts of the world, could not show greater generosity or freedom from jealousy.

Thus we see how much Christianity may

owe to the Moslem, how much civilization may learn from those less privileged, how much Europe may be indebted to the liberality of the Turk. Truly, travel tends to enlargement of notions!

HOLY PLACES IN THE HOLY LAND



MEETING BY THE WAY

CHAPTER VIII

HOLY PLACES IN THE HOLY LAND

THERE are certain names which one invariably recalls at the very mention of the Holy Land; names of places in which, whether from an historical or a religious point of view, all one's ideas of those things which give interest to the country are centralized. There are people who even refuse to make their pilgrimage to Jerusalem lest their preconceived images should be subjected to the shock of disillusion. It will, however, be generally found that those who are most disenchanted, are those who know the country least.

It may be true, as alleged, that at first sight Jerusalem presents the appearance of a second-rate Italian suburb, though the

constant addition of really handsome and costly buildings should tend to remove the stigma. The arrival by train is, to some, in itself a disenchantment, although the journey is full of interest. A fact which contributes to the common disappointment is, that the buildings, being of white limestone, in a country in which no rain falls during the greater part of the year, are very long in losing their air of newness.

The difficulties of landing at Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem, are commonly exaggerated, although the fact that one may have to await an opportunity for doing so, or even be carried past in stormy weather, is sufficiently irritating, especially to the personally-conducted tourist, with limited leisure, and a visit mapped out in advance. One wonders how Solomon brought in his cedar-trees, and his ivory, and apes, and peacocks; and one feels no surprise at the difficulties encountered by Jonah when he wanted to start for Tarshish.



THE COURT OF A HOUSE IN DAMASCUS.

Some of the old houses of Damascus are very interesting, with carved façades, inlaid marble flooring, and an entire suite of chambers devoted to the bath.



From the sea the town of Jaffa is very picturesque, with its worn grey buildings in their setting of deliciously scented orange gardens. Once ashore, and ankle deep in sand or mud, according to the season, one is apt to take some credit for energy and determination in visiting the House of Simon the Tanner—still a tannery—and the home of Tabitha, on the road to Lydda. There is just time for this, before taking the train for Jerusalem : and few in these days go up by road, as used to be the custom—to the old habitué of the country a far pleasanter one.

Still, the railway journey has much to show of interest. We pass Lydda, the home of St. George, whose burial-place is shown, and Ramleh, generally supposed to be Arimathea, containing the ruins of a very early Christian Church, as well as much of interest to the student of history and of Saracenic architecture. We are now crossing the Plain of Sharon, where

countless varieties of flowers still testify to the same magnificent productiveness which rendered "the rose of Sharon" a proverbial phrase in days gone by. It is the granary of Southern Palestine, and the Jewish colonists are taking advantage of this, and are buying land wherever it may be had. Every year one notes changes in the landscape, as, one after another, great stretches, not only of the plain, but even of the low boundary hills, once so bleak and bare, are being planted with fruit-trees of every kind, and dotted with the villages of these persevering agriculturists. The Germans, too, are doing their share, and the village of Wilhelma supplies Jerusalem with dairy produce and excellent wine.

Leaving the plain, we travel for a couple of hours through the narrow mountain gorges which take us up and up, some three thousand feet or more, to Jerusalem. How much of Bible history took place in these narrow gorges, especially in times when the



THE CONVENT OF ST. GEORGE.

Below is the Brook Cherith. As in the time of Elijah, it is still the last of the wadys to dry up.



Philistines harried the Israelites in these border lands! for one must remember that the "strong cities" of the enemy lay in the fertile country we have left behind. The steep hillsides seem almost to meet overhead as we puff and pant upwards, following the "wady," the bed of the stream, dry for the greater part of the year. Great rocks threaten us from above, and we picture the days when David sheltered in their gloomy caves, or Samson hunted for foxes, which, as a matter of fact must have been jackals, for the destruction of the vineyard of the Philistines, on the tableland above, or in the plain below.

The train at last enters the Plain of Rephidim, the hills recede, and we note the keener mountain air of Jerusalem. It is now that one regrets not having come by road, for it is the first sight of Jerusalem, as one leaves the station, which visitors find disappointing. Behind us lies Bethlehem; before us, after a steep climb, Mount Sion

and the Citadel of David, which is mainly Herodian. At the head of the Valley of Hinnom is the British Ophthalmic Hospital, maintained by the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. Above the Lower Pool of Gihon is the Jewish colony built by Sir Moses Montefiore. Thus does the new ever mingle with the old!

The old Jerusalem is that which lies within the walls. The streets are impassable for vehicles, many are tunnelled, and many consist mainly of steps, so steep is the hillside. It is within the city walls and with such surroundings that we find the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Mount Calvary, the Via Dolorosa, the Temple Area, the wailing place of the Jews, and much else of sacred association. This is not the place to discuss the authenticity of sites. Their values lie mainly in the heart which feels and the eye which sees. The most doubtful of them is consecrated by the prayers, the tears, the painful pilgrimages

of wellnigh two thousand years. Many, such as some of the points upon the Via Dolorosa, are not offered as exact identifications—such indeed would be impossible; but in regard to the identification of the Holy Sepulchre, and the site of Calvary, it may be said that modern scientific inquiry, while refusing to dogmatize, is increasingly in favour of the traditional sites unintentionally preserved for us by the very desecration which built a Temple of Venus over the Holy Sepulchre, and a Temple of Jupiter over the site of the Jewish Temple, in order to divert attention from what was dear to Christianity. These were recovered and preserved in the fourth century under the Emperor Constantine, and have been kept sacred ever since.

A writer in the *Times* newspaper recently expressed the reaction of modern criticism upon these matters. "We have been taught by a long series of sceptical inquiries to take almost for granted that if, accord-

ing to an ancient tradition, a famous event happened in a particular spot, it must really have happened somewhere else, unless, indeed, it never happened at all. If we rid our minds of this unscientific prejudice against all traditions, we shall see that there is nothing to be said against the tradition of the site of the Nativity, and much to be said for it." What he points out in regard to the Church at Bethlehem is equally true of many other places.

Jerusalem, outside the walls, has been built mainly within the last twenty years, though in part dating from the close of the Crimean War. It exists largely for the benefit of those very tourists who complain of it as too new, for the hotels and shops were undoubtedly created on their account.

There are, however, other, and for the most part very handsome buildings mainly German, French, and Jewish — convents, churches, schools, hospitals. One regrets the modern and Occidental style of some of



Ame ican Colony *Jerusalem.*

JERUSALEM.

The road leads up from the station to the ancient city. Old Jerusalem lies within the city walls. The newer portion, outside the walls, has been built chiefly within the last twenty years.



these, but such a charge cannot be brought against three of the most recent German constructions—the great Hospice of St. Paul designed according to the sixteenth-century style of the city walls, and of the Damascus Gate, which are its neighbours, the Church of the German Benedictines, remarkable for the perfect finish of its details, and the great Convalescent Home, the Victoria Stiftung, on the Mount of Olives, also copied from ancient buildings of the same period.

The Church of St. George, with its adjoining school and the house of the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, is also pleasing, in the Italian style. It lies at some distance from the town towards the Mount of Olives. The London Society for the Conversion of the Jews has a church—early Victorian—and a hospital. The Jews themselves have many fine buildings, while their domestic architecture covers at least a third of Jerusalem without the walls, but

is unfortunately, for the most part, mean in style and unnecessarily crowded together.

From the artistic and architectural point of view, nothing in the whole country of Palestine can compare for a moment with the so-called Mosque of Omar, which, as it is not a mosque, nor connected with Omar, is more correctly known as the Dome of the Rock, the Rock being, according to tradition, not only the Altar of Burnt Offering of the Temple, but also the scene of the Sacrifice of Isaac, and the Threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. The Dome, now a revered praying place of the Moslems, which, with its neighbouring Mosque of El Aksa, is second only to Mecca in sanctity, is a masterpiece of Oriental art, thought by some to surpass in beauty of form and colouring even the Taj Mahal. The enclosure, or haram, is dotted with subsidiary buildings, and the whole covers an area equal to one-fifth of the city.

With their usual liberality, the Muham-



A STREET IN JERUSALEM.

A typical street inside the walls of the city. It lies in the Muhammedan quarter, as may be seen from the latticed windows of the women's rooms.



medans allow the Christians free access, on the understanding that they will comply with the conditions of common reverence which are imposed.

From the walls of the Haram Area we look across the Valley of Jehoshaphat, past various tombs, including one still cursed by the Jews as that of Absalom, and that of Zacharias the son of Barachias, across to the Mount of Olives, with the Garden of Gethsemane and the Brook Kedron, now lost in superincumbent rubbish, at its foot. On the spur of the hill, beyond the fine Russian church, lies the little village of Bethany.

Bethlehem until quite lately preserved its ancient and strictly Oriental aspect, but the increasing demands upon their hospitality, especially at Christmas, have obliged the Franciscans to erect a new guest-house by the side of the great pile of buildings, the growth of sixteen centuries, which are massed about the ancient church, which

covers the cave-stable where Jesus Christ was born. Here we find churches and hospices, Latin, Greek, Armenian, and Syrian.

This disfigurement does not stand alone, although it is that which the eye especially resents. Outside the little town are hospitals, convents, and schools, Roman Catholic and German; the one English institution, a school for girls, is well out of sight, and little noticeable; moreover, the people of Bethlehem, industrious and enterprising, have grown rich by trading abroad, and are building new houses of the suburban villa variety.

All, however, is forgotten when we enter the Church of the Nativity. It is said by experts to be, of all churches contemporary with the triumph of Christianity erected on the famous sites of Palestine, the only one which remains to us in any completeness. The great destructive conquerors of Jerusalem, who again and again destroyed, in whole or part, the monuments of



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

THE BROOK KISHON AND MOUNT CARMEL.

Moslem and Jew alike have confidence in the therapeutic qualities of a cave in Mount Carmel which is associated with Elijah.



Christianity, seemed to have passed Bethlehem by, and we may look upon columns of Constantine and apses of Justinian with as much certainty as upon the rough walls of the humble cave-stable which they shelter and commemorate. On the hillside we are shown the fields of Boaz, and the acres which entitled Joseph to count himself a citizen of Bethlehem. In the plain below, lie the Shepherds' Fields, the ruins of an early Christian church still visible near the cave which may have given shelter when they "kept their flocks by night," and further down the valley toward the Dead Sea stands out the conical hill whence Herod's castle frowned down upon the royal city when the Child Jesus came to dwell among men.

Less modernized is the little town of Hebron. Its lack of New-Testament associations is the probable cause of the absence of all ecclesiastical buildings. Russia alone, of all Churches of East or

West, has made provision for pilgrims, and has erected a hospice, with its chapel, close beside the alleged Oak of Abraham, which —far advanced in decay—may quite well be the descendant of an earlier tree upon a spot which has at least been long held sacred.

The inhabitants, fanatical and inhospitable, are Jews and Moslems, to whom the Cave of Macpelah, the burial-place of Abraham, their common ancestor, is alike sacred. The Jews, however, are not allowed access to the great mosque, with its striking twin towers, but they assemble to pray at a certain doorway, which they regard as that nearest to the holy spot. A Scottish hospital is doing useful work among the poor of the town.

Nazareth, two days northward in Galilee, belongs to a different atmosphere, and is among the most visited of all the Holy Places. It abounds to excess in hospitals, schools, orphanages, every Church of Christendom vying with every other in superfluous



American Colony *Jerusalem.*

A NATIVE INN.

The Inn of the Good Samaritan on the road to Jericho.



charity. The traditions as to the sacred places are of great antiquity, and even if one does not feel greatly impressed by "Joseph's workshop" or "Mary's kitchen," at least one can hardly doubt that at the village spring the Holy Family must have filled their water-jars, and that we have before our eyes "the brow of the hill whereon the city was built" from which the fellow-townsmen of Jesus sought to cast Him down headlong.

He went, we may remember, on this occasion to Capernaum; a pleasant journey now, passing—if we will—through the little village of Cana, where we may see the women at the well filling the great water-pots as they filled them at the wedding-feast, passing the foot of Mount Tabor, thought by many to be the Mount of Transfiguration, where the early Christians built the three Tabernacles proposed by the Apostles, passing through the beautiful Galilean meadows, so great a contrast to the scant grass of Judæa, the campanulas

and gladiolus and marguerites reaching up to our stirrups ; passing through the town of Tiberias and beside the Sea of Genesareth, harp-shaped, of the size of Windermere, set in a frame of purple hills, the Horns of Hattin, possible scene of the Sermon on the Mount, looking down upon the nearer distance, while snow-crowned Hermon is lost in the clouds, away up to the north.

Perhaps no scenes in the Holy Land are so restful, none so completely recall the gentle message of the New Testament, as these. It is a message the memory never wholly loses sight of in the Holy Land, but here one feels that it has been left with Nature to deliver, and one has not to discount for any divergences nor discrepancies which man may have introduced. The ruins of Bethsaida and Chorazin are covered over with flowers, and when we come to Capernaum we part the oleander bushes, with their glory of crimson and white, to gaze on ruins which bring before us the pathetic story of the centurion of whom the

Jews said, "He was worthy, for he loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue." Greco-Roman ruins lie all about us as we journey; Jewish ruins, too, in many places, but here is just that combination of the two which have led our antiquaries to speculate that these may be indeed the remains of that gift of the conquering to the conquered which earned for the centurion that meed of praise: "When Jesus heard these things He marvelled at him!"

As we travel northward we seem to be carried back into an older history. At Haifa, yet another day's journey, under the shadow of Mount Carmel, our thoughts are mainly of Old Testament times—the cave where Elijah hid the prophets, the mountain-top where he made the appeal for the victory over Baal, while northward we see the Plain of Kishon, where, in the brutal fashion of his times, he gathered the false prophets together and slew them.

We find here, however, one welcome reminder of another dispensation in the

English hospital, with its bright garden and its school and little Chapel of St. Luke, which, on behalf of the Jerusalem and the East Mission, ministers, without interference with their beliefs, to the bodies and the souls of men. Truly a sunlit spot this is, amid much surrounding darkness, an oasis unspotted from the world. There is also another hospital with its school and kindly Sisters, German, of the Order of St. Charles Borromeo.

Northward still, we come to Beirut, with its colleges, American and French, and its well-known Hospital of the German Deaconesses; with its air, too, of pseudo-European civilization, from which we escape to study the rock inscriptions erected at the Dog River to celebrate some great Egyptian or Assyrian triumph, one of which was erased by Napoleon III. in order to record his own!

Hence a few hours of excellent railway travelling brings us to Damascus, perhaps the oldest city in the world, where electric

lighting and electric tramways have a curious air of temporary and futile protest. In the street which is called "Straight" you may have to squeeze yourself flat against the crumbling wall to let the hooting monstrosity go by, but in an instant you return to the "unchanging East," and your thoughts are with Eliezer of Damascus, Abraham's steward, or with Naaman the Syrian, or with St. Paul, or, at latest, with that great and generous warrior Salah-ed-din, whom in schoolroom days we called Saladin, whose tomb yonder is covered with tributes from other soldiers, who, like Sir Walter Scott, knew something of his great-heartedness. A wreath placed there by the Emperor William II. is one of the more recent.

Here in this land of Palestine all ages meet. It is the country of sunrise and sunset, but there are signs for those who know the land, and who love to look into its secrets, that the sun has set to rise again.

INDEX

Index

Index

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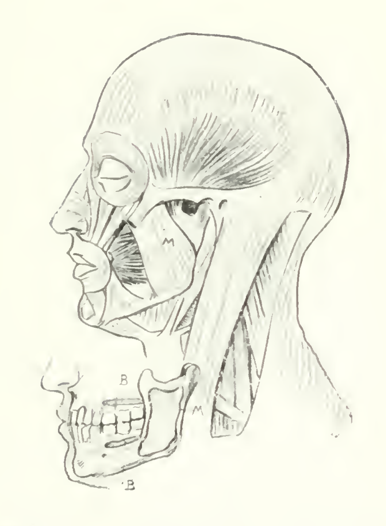
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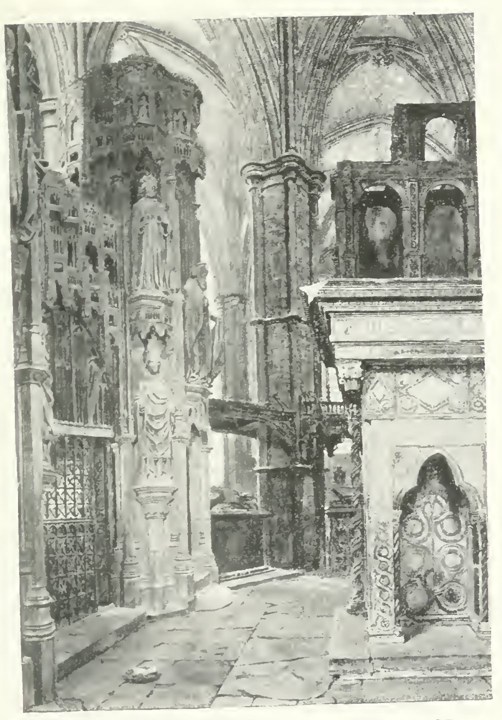
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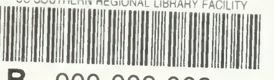
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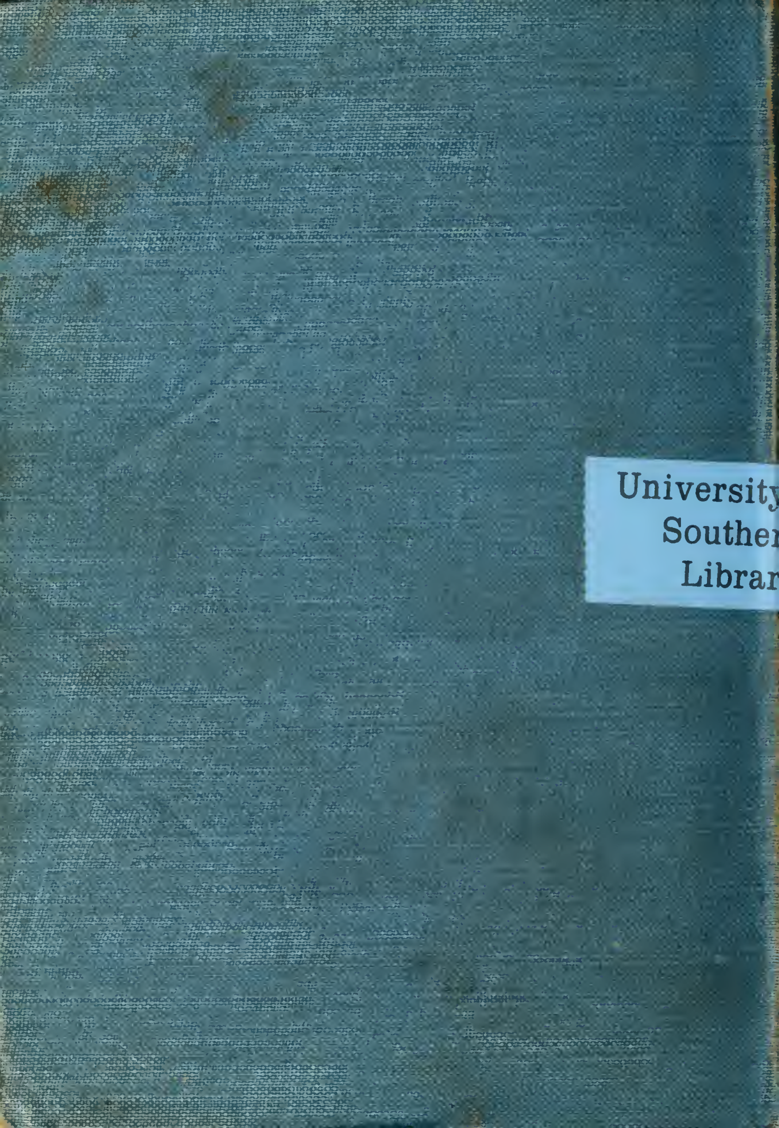
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